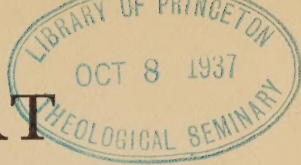


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The heart of the Christian
faith



THE HEART OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

by

Francis Shunk Downs, D.D.

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To
MY MOTHER
IN GRATITUDE AND LOVE

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

The officers of the American Tract Society announce, with profound thanksgiving and great satisfaction, that as a result of the recent One Thousand Dollar Prize Contest "for the best treatise on one or more essential evangelical doctrines of the Christian faith" several manuscripts were presented of such exceptional value and merit that their publication was strongly advised by the committee on awarding the prize.

Happily, arrangements were made with the authors for the early publication of their manuscripts, in connection with and in addition to that which won the prize.

The American Tract Society is proud to announce further that the manuscript of this volume was one of those considered unusually meritorious.

The officers of the Society also acknowledge their indebtedness to a friend whose gift of One Thousand Dollars made possible this prize contest and secured for the Society the prize book and four others of outstanding value and importance.

The publishers and the author desire to gratefully acknowledge their indebtedness to the following publishers and authors for their permission to quote from the books listed:

To John A. Dickson Publishing Company for quotations from the Introduction to *The New Analytical*

Bible; to Harper Brothers for *The Cross in Christian Experience* by W. M. Clow; to A. C. Gaebelein for *Exploring the Bible* by Frank E. Gaebelein; to Fleming H. Revell Company for *Why I Believe the Bible* by David James Burrell, *Fundamental Doctrines of Christian Faith* by R. A. Torrey, *Great Questions about Christ* by C. H. Macartney, *Deity of Christ* by Robert E. Speer, *The Teaching of Christ* by Campbell Morgan, *Is the Bible True* by B. Atkinson; to Oxford University Press for quotations from *Scofield Reference Bible*; to Bible Institute Colportage Association for quotations from *Great Doctrines of the Bible*; to Westminster Press for quotations from *Summary of Christian Doctrine*, and *Presbyterian Shorter Catechism*; to Charles H. Scribner & Son for quotations from *Dictionary of the Bible*, and *Dictionary of the Gospels*, and *An Appeal to Unitarians* from Bishop Gore's Bampton Lectures, and *Systematic Theology* by C. Hodge; to Longmans, Green & Company for quotations from *Christianity is Christ* by Griffith Thomas; to Methodist Book Concern for *The Resurrection of Jesus* by James Orr; to Sunday School Times Company for quotations from *Outline Bible Studies* by H. Frost; to The Macmillan Company for *Fundamental Christianity* by Francis L. Patton.

INTRODUCTION

The Christian Church is hoping and praying for a revival of religion. Never was a real revival, a true work of the Holy Spirit not worked up but worked down, more needed than it is today. The avowed enemies of Christianity were never more numerous, more powerful or more aggressive than they are in the time in which we live. Beside the open enemies of the Gospel in Russia and Germany and in non-Christian lands, there are subtle influences in our own and other so-called Christian countries that are weakening in their effects upon Christian faith and Christian character.

One symptom of religious decline in our day is the lack of instruction in the great doctrines of our faith and the loss of interest and belief in them. This loss may be accompanied by a commendable zeal for social reform, for improvements in public worship or for the cultivation of a private piety of a mystical type, but one thing is certain. If we Christians stop thinking upon the great themes of our religion and teaching its doctrines, others will do our thinking and our teaching for us. They will frame our "dogmas" for us, and will be apt to do this in the interests of an anti-Christian philosophy. They will occupy the field we have abandoned, and they will preach the gospel of a materialistic or semi-pagan State whose authority, as we

know too well, is not favorable to the maintenance of our hard-won religious liberty.

Dr. Downs has met an urgent need in expounding in popular and attractive form the great doctrines of Inspiration, Incarnation, Atonement and Regeneration, and in showing the practical application of these doctrines to the Christian life. I know of no one who is better qualified to write such a book. Dr. Downs' study of law before he entered the ministry gives precision to his style and clearness to his argument. As a popular preacher he knows how to lighten and illumine his pages with apt illustrations. He has the equipment of a scholar but knows the human heart and its needs. He understands the problems of university students, many of whom are found each Sunday in his congregation at Berkeley. His exposition is Biblical and in the main will command the approval of Christians of all denominations. He is a strong defender of the essentials of the evangelical faith but his main purpose is not apologetic but evangelistic, and in every chapter his argument turns into an appeal. By reading his book mature Christians will find that their faith is made stronger and more intelligent, and it is hoped that a thoughtful study of it will help many young people and inquirers to see the attractiveness and reasonableness of the Christian faith and will lead them to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

WM. HALLOCK JOHNSON, PH.D., D.D.,
President Emeritus of Lincoln University, Pa.

CHAPTER I

THE INSPIRED BOOK

WHAT a marvellous thing this Word of God is! It is God-breathed, God-inspired, the very "breath of his lips." This is what makes the Word of God the living word. It can never be a dead letter but is always quick with spiritual life and able to quicken into life those who are dead in sins and trespasses. I breathe upon a window on a frosty morning, and leave there a lace-work of palaces and landscapes and armies marching with diamond pointed spears. So God breathed through human lips upon parchment called Scriptures. The deposit left there was the very breath of God. What Martin Luther said of Paul's writings is true of all Scripture, that its words are not dead words, but are living creatures and have hands and feet.

The Word of God has amazing penetrative power. It pierces into the deepest recesses of man's soul. It convicts men in their heart of hearts. The author of the Book of Hebrews says that it parts "soul and spirit," "joints and marrow." To the individual soul the Word of God is like "a fire" and "a hammer." It is sharper than any two-edged sword, two-edged because it both punishes as a sword and heals as a surgeon's knife. Someone has said it gives sensibility and power to the heavenward side of our being, and enables

us to distinguish what in us is carnal and must be subdued. These holy men of old, who wrote as inspired by the Spirit of God, manifested a more profound knowledge of human nature than Shakespeare or Goethe, Tennyson or Browning. The Bible is the touchstone of character and reveals the true spiritual condition of everyone who reads its pages.

The English word "Bible" comes from a Greek word meaning "book." The Bible, however, is not merely a book. It is composed of sixty-six books, thirty-seven in the Old Testament and twenty-nine in the New Testament. Different names have been given the Bible. It is called the "oracles of God" (Rom. 3:1-2), "the word" (James 1:21; 1 Pet. 2:2), "the word of truth" (James 1:18), "the word of Christ" (Col. 3:16), "the scripture" (Mark 12:10; Luke 4:21; 2 Pet. 1:20), "the scriptures" (Luke 24:27; John 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:15), and "the holy scriptures."

THE INSPIRED BOOK OF GOD

Is the Bible the inspired Book of God, or is it inspired only in the sense in which the best literature of the centuries is inspired? Are the Holy Scriptures so inspired that they are free from error and may be depended upon? In what sense is the Bible inspired, and what do we mean when we say, "I believe in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures"?

The Bible has always been under fire, especially at this point, for if it can be proved that the Bible is not inspired in the sense which it claims for itself, then the house of Christian faith is weakened at its very founda-

tion. Infidelity and unbelief have attacked the inspiration of the Scriptures from the beginning. This blasting at the rock of Scripture has been without ceasing through the centuries, and yet the Bible stands and will continue to stand as the Word of God. One hundred and seventy years ago Lord Chesterfield while visiting Paris was entertained in the home of a distinguished lady. In the course of their conversation she said: "My lord, I am informed that your English Parliament is composed of five hundred or six hundred of the most profound and brilliant thinkers. This being so, will you explain how it is, under their authority, the Bible is still recognized as final authority in the legislation of your country and how it is that the obsolete religion of the crucified Nazarene is maintained as your state religion?" He replied: "Madam, this is a mere temporary makeshift. We are casting about for something better; and when we discover it, the Bible and Christianity will certainly give way."

The world has never found anything better with which to supplant the Bible, while all the destructive criticism of the citadel of Holy Scripture has failed to destroy it.

What do we mean by inspiration? The word means "breathed in." We read in 2 Timothy 3:16, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God." That is, it is "God-breathed." Another mind or spirit has breathed into the word which human beings have been led to think and write; 2 Peter 1:21 tells us: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." That is, these holy men of God spake as they

were borne along by the Holy Spirit. They were overshadowed by a power outside themselves and that power was the Spirit of God, breathing into and through them. It was this in-breathing of God into these men which equipped them to express the truth.

The church of Jesus Christ has universally held the Bible to be inspired. It is believed that the sacred writers were so influenced by the Holy Spirit that their writings, as a whole and in every part of them, are in very truth God's Word to us. Therefore these writings are an authoritative revelation to us from God, approved by Him, and attested by Him, and sent to us as an infallible rule of faith and practice. The original autographs were so divinely inspired that they are to be accepted as absolutely infallible, and therefore have the divine authority back of them and resting upon them. Protestants have always accepted the Scriptures as the highest court of appeal.

Christianity is a reasonable religion, but it does not follow that the seat of authority in Christianity is the reason. I cannot accept the doctrine of the mass because it is contrary to reason, but I can accept the doctrine of the Trinity which is above reason but not contrary to reason.

Roman Catholics claim that the seat of authority in religion is the Church, that the Church is infallible, and that there is no appeal from her teachings. Roman Catholics believe that the Scriptures are infallible and inspired, but they also add unto the Scriptures a mass of tradition to which they have given their seal of authority. The Roman Church claims that these tradi-

tions are true because they have been endorsed by an infallible Church.

We believe however that the seat of authority in religion is the Bible, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The greatest thing that the Reformation did was to put the Scriptures in their proper place and give to them the authority that is theirs by divine inspiration. As Dr. Patton eloquently says: "Once convinced that the Scriptures are the seat of final authority, that the individual has the right to read the Bible for himself and that salvation comes by the exercise of individual faith, the battle was won. So were broken the chains that bind the consciences of men to the organization of the Church; so was launched the great principle of freedom which made possible the reformation of free political institutions; so ended the business of brokerage in human souls; so were driven out the middlemen from the traffic in the wares of immortality and so the individual began to transact the business of his soul alone with God. . . . The Reformers did not put the emphasis upon individual freedom, but upon the authority of the Bible." (*Fundamental Christianity*, p. 139.)

Let us now consider the difference between inspiration and revelation. Revelation is that act of God whereby He communicates to men truth which hitherto has not been revealed and which could not be known by man in any other way. Inspiration is not that truth itself, but that overshadowing on the part of God which controls the giving of truth, so that in the writing and recording of it it is put down just as God

intended it to be. Many people become confused at this point. All that is in the Bible is not revelation from God. Words are spoken and deeds are done by wicked people which God cannot approve, but the record that tells us of these things is inspired; that is, it is a true record set there for our admonition and instruction and can be relied upon. The history is true history. The experiences recorded in the Bible actually happened. The things that distress us, as well as those things that comfort us, have been placed there under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I find little for my soul's salvation or to strengthen my Christian life in the words, "The cloak that I left at Troas," but these words are none the less inspired. That is, Paul did leave his cloak at Troas, and as a link in the historical account of his life and journeyings, that fact occurred and can be relied upon. The inspiration of the Bible guarantees the accuracy of the record that we find in the Bible.

We must distinguish between inspiration and illumination. Christians are illumined by the Spirit of God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are spiritually discerned. Men have been so spiritually illumined that they have been able to understand a great deal of spiritual truth. Some men may get a very deep and true insight into the nature and being of God through spiritual illumination and spiritual meditation, but there is a great difference between a true revelation of the mind of God and a divine action on the mind of man. One is objective; the other is subjective. One is God revealing Himself; the

other is man feeling after God in the highest reaches of spiritual effort that he may find Him.

Let us make plain at this point that inspiration is not verbatim reporting. The Church has never held what we may call the "mechanical theory" of inspiration. Those who wrote the books of the Bible were not machines; they were human beings. The Holy Spirit does not descend upon machines but upon men; He does not overshadow mechanical instruments, but God-chosen personalities. The Holy Spirit's control did not involve the suspension or suppression of the human faculties of a man, neither did it rob the writer of his individuality. Dr. Charles Hodge has said: "If a Hebrew was inspired, he spake Hebrew. If a Greek, he spake Greek; if an educated man he spoke as a man of culture; if uneducated, he spoke as such a man is wont to speak. If his mind was logical, he reasoned as Paul did; if emotional and contemplative, he wrote as John wrote. . . . It lies in the very nature of inspiration that God spoke in the language of man; that he uses men as his organs each according to his peculiar gifts and endowments. There is no reason to believe that the operation of the Spirit in inspiration revealed itself any more in the consciousness of the sacred writers, than His operations in sanctification reveal themselves in the consciousness of the Christian." (*Systematic Theology*, vol. I, p. 157.)

THEORIES OF INSPIRATION

There have been various theories of inspiration. When a man today says, 'I believe in Christ,' you may have

to ask him, 'Which Christ?' So it is that when a man says, 'I believe in the inspiration of the Bible,' you may have to ask him, 'What do you mean by inspiration?'

There is the theory of illumination. It means that the writers of the Bible were illumined in the same way as enlightened Christians of any generation may be illumined, only in greater degree.

There is the theory of natural inspiration. Those who hold to this belief generally deny any supernatural agency in the affairs of men. In the early days, poets were thought to be inspired and there was developed the theory of "furor poeticus"; that is, that the poet was moved at such a time to excessive enthusiasm or to a poetical madness. Those who look to the Scriptures as literature, not as revelation, think of them as inspired in the same way in which Homer, Shakespeare, Dante or Browning were inspired. But the difference is not one of degree, but of kind.

There is the theory of mechanical inspiration. Those who deride plenary or verbal inspiration, like to set this theory up as a "straw man." This theory of inspiration makes out the authors of the Bible as mere machines, mechanical instruments, human dictaphones, who, as the Spirit of God moved upon them, had no human individuality, but were mere puppets in the power that handled them, and as automatons, insensible and unresponsive, were pulled hither and yon, as the Spirit willed and controlled. This is not the Bible's conception of plenary or verbal inspiration. It is man's conception, and especially the conception of those who

deny that the Bible is truly the inspired Book, the very Word of God.

There is the theory of partial inspiration. Those who hold this theory believe that parts of the Scripture are inspired, but that other parts are not inspired; that some of the books were supernaturally directed, and that others were not. Coleridge believed in the inspiration of the Law and the Prophets, but believed that the rest of the Bible was not inspired. I recently talked with a person who accepted the teachings of Jesus Christ as inspired and authoritative, but not the teaching of Paul, even though it had to do with the same truths that Christ taught.

The question arises, If all of the Bible is not inspired, who has the authority to tell us what is inspired and what is not inspired? If one man may take a portion of Scripture for himself and reject another portion, what becomes of the Scriptures? Again, there are those who believe that the inspiration of the sacred writers was limited to their teaching of doctrine and ethics. The Spirit rendered them infallible in these fields, but whenever they spoke of historical, geographical or scientific matters, they were prone to err and at times did make mistakes. Many who hold to partial inspiration, maintain that inspiration is applied only to the thoughts of the writers and not to their words. That is, the Spirit of God suggested the thoughts, but the men themselves furnished the words. The question immediately arises, How could inspired thought be accurately expressed or transmitted unless at least, to some degree, the words or language used to express the thoughts were likewise inspired?

Dr. Arthur T. Pierson in the following notable paragraph summarizes the argument for verbal inspiration: "There are, with regard to this question of verbal inspiration, or the oversight of the very words of Scripture, five important significant passages in the Word of God: Hebrews 12:27; Galatians 4:9; John 8:58; John 10:34-36; Galatians 3:16. If these passages are examined it will be seen that in the first instance the argument turns on one phrase, 'yet once more'. In the second, on the passive voice rather than the active voice of the verb. In the third, on the present rather than the past tense. In the fourth, on the inviolability of a single word; and in the fifth, on the retention of the singular number of a noun, rather than the plural. Taking the five passages together, they teach us that, to alter or omit a phrase, change the voice or mood or tense of a verb, change a single word or even the number of a noun, is to break the Scriptures; and if this does not come close to verbal inspiration, then I am no judge." (Gaebelein: *Exploring the Bible*, (pp. 44-45.)

It clearly follows that a mere human report or record of a divine revelation must, of necessity, be fallible and in many instances mistaken. Unless the inspiration of the Bible extends to the words themselves in some real way we cannot have a fully inspired Book of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

PLENARY INSPIRATION

We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Plenary means full or complete, that which

is opposed to partial. It does not mean that the writers had plenary knowledge or that their characters were perfect, but it does mean that they were infallible as teachers "when acting as the spokesmen of God."

Plenary inspiration is opposed to partial inspiration. It means that every part and all parts of the Word of God are inspired. It means that the sacred writers were fully inspired, whether they were teaching facts or doctrines, history or religion. It does not mean that they had plenary knowledge on all questions of history, economics, philosophy or science, neither does it mean that they were free from imperfections in their character and conduct.

The Scripture that best sums up in a small compass the teaching of the Bible on plenary inspiration is 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The Revised and some other versions translate it, "All Scripture that is divinely inspired is also profitable," etc. In other words, it says that some Scripture is not profitable, but only that which is divinely inspired, and definitely suggests, if it does not assert, that there are portions of Scripture that are not divinely inspired. To accept this theory of inspiration is to make man the judge of what ought to be in the Bible and what ought not to be.

Dr. William Evans reminds us of what great scholars have said in regard to this text when he says: "The great rationalistic scholar DeWette confessed candidly that the rendering the revisers adopted in this version cannot be defended. . . . Bishops Moberly and Words-

worth, Archbishop Trench, and others of the Revision Committee, disclaimed any responsibility for the rendering. Dean Burgon pronounced it 'the most astonishing as well as calamitous literary blunder of the age'. It was condemned by Dr. Tregelles, the only man ever pensioned by the British Government for scholarship." (*Great Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 202.)

The Scriptures themselves claim to be inspired. Do we reason in a circle when we rest the truth of the inspiration of the Scriptures on their own assertions?

Whatever Christ affirms of the Old Testament and whatever He promises to the Apostles and whatever they assert as to the divine influence, acting in and through themselves, or as to the infallibility and authority of their writings, must be true; especially must this be so as all their claims were approved by God working with them by signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles claim to have the Spirit in fulfilment of the promise of Christ, to speak as the prophets of God and to speak with plenary authority. They put their own writings on a level with the Old Testament Scriptures. (2 Pet. 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; Col. 4:16; Rev. 2:7.) Was not their claim confirmed by their holy and heroic lives, by the purity of the doctrine they taught, its spiritual power and influence upon individuals and society, by the miracles they wrought and by the testimony of those who were eyewitnesses?

The writers of the Old Testament also claimed to be inspired. As Dr. A. A. Hodge points out: "Moses claimed that he wrote a part at least of the Pentateuch, Deut. 31:19-22; Deut. 34:10; Numbers 16:

28-29. David claimed it. II Samuel 23:2. As a characteristic fact, the Old Testament writers spoke not in their own name but prefaced their messages with 'Thus saith the Lord', 'The mouth of the Lord has spoken it'. Jer. 9:12; Jer. 13:13 and 30:9. Isaiah 8:1; 33:10; Micah 4:4; Amos 3:1; Deut. 18:21-22; I Kings 21:28; I Chron. 17:3. Their claim was confirmed to their contemporaries by the miracles they wrought, by the fulfillment of many of their predictions, by the holiness of their lives, the moral and spiritual perfection of their doctrine and the practical adaptation of the religious system they revealed to the urgent wants of man. Their claim is confirmed to us, principally by the remarkable fulfillment in far-subsequent ages of many of their prophecies, by the evident relation of the symbolical religion which was promulgated, to the facts and doctrines of Christianity, proving a divine preadjustment of the type to the antitype, and by the endorsement of Christ and His Apostles." (*Outlines of Theology*, pp. 70-71.)

The fact that discrepancies exist in the Bible is used as an objection to holding to the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. Suffice it to say that the Christian Church has never held the verbal infallibility of our translations. As the Scriptures have been handed down through the centuries through translations some discrepancies have resulted. It is the unanimous testimony of Christian scholars however that these few and unimportant discrepancies "neither involve the loss nor abate the evidence of a single essential fact or doctrine of Christianity." The Church has maintained and asserted absolute infallibility only of the original au-

tographed copies of the Scriptures as they came from the hands of their inspired writers.

The apparent discrepancies in the Bible are relatively few in number, and are chiefly trivial. Many yield to honest and careful study. Obviously they are due to errors in transmission through the centuries.

The few errors to be found in Scripture, which the skeptics have discovered and like to talk about, bear only a tiny proportion to the whole structure of inspired truth. Recently I visited the beautiful memorial to Abraham Lincoln in Washington. No fair-minded man would deny that that beautiful building was of marble, even though here and there a speck of sandstone should be detected in its structure.

Men say that they cannot hold the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures because it teaches what is inconsistent with historical and scientific truth. Dr. Charles Hodge has a very helpful passage which is as timely for us today as when it was written: "Here again it is to be remarked, (1.) That we must distinguish between what the sacred writers themselves thought or believed, and what they teach. They may have believed that the sun moves round the earth, but they do not so teach. (2.) The language of the Bible is the language of common life; and the language of common life is founded on apparent, and not upon scientific truth. It would be ridiculous to refuse to speak of the sun rising and setting, because we know that it is not a satellite of our planet. (3.) There is a great distinction between theories and facts. Theories are of men. Facts are of God. The Bible often contradicts the former, never the latter. (4.) There is also a distinction to be

made between the Bible and our interpretation. The latter may come into competition with settled facts; and then it must yield. Science has in many things taught the church how to understand the Scriptures. The Bible was for ages understood and explained according to the Ptolemaic system of the universe; it is now explained without doing the least violence to its language, according to the Copernican system. . . . Men hostile or indifferent to its truths may, on insufficient grounds, or because of their personal opinions, reject its authority; but, even in the judgment of the greatest authorities in science, its teachings cannot fairly be impeached." (*Systematic Theology*, vol. I, pp. 170-171.)

ITS MARVELLOUS UNITY

We believe in the divine origin and the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scripture because of the marvellous unity of this Book of books. Unless God is the author and inspired all the sacred writers, this unity is indeed an unaccountable one. Here is a volume made up of sixty-six books written by about forty writers over a period of at least fifteen hundred years, yet giving a clear impression that it is essentially one book and the expression of one mind. Yet these books constitute one Book, forming a unity impossible to be understood unless there was one mind back of all and one Spirit directing all. Such a unity could not just happen. The Bible claims to be inspired of God, and the remarkable unity of the Book supports that claim. There is only one God, and there is only one Book of God. The

Spirit of God must be the unifying factor in the production of the books that constitute the divine library. Where in all literature could this be duplicated? Do you find such a unity of theme, such a harmony of statement, such a oneness of teaching in Dr. Charles Eliot's five-foot shelf of books? Did this unity just happen, or are we driven irresistibly to the conclusion that back of this Book, guiding it, inspiring it, creating it, was God Himself?

One of our missionaries in China gave a Chinese gentleman a copy of the New Testament to read. He took it home, began reading it, was so thrilled with its contents that he read on most of the night until he had completed it. The next morning his first words to the missionary were: "Where is the other half?" St. Augustine, in his epigrammatic style, has put it this way: "The New Testament is enfolded in the Old; the Old Testament is unfolded in the New." Dr. David J. Burrell says: "It is difficult if not impossible to account for the singular unity of the Scriptures without according to them a divine origin. . . . If forty odd persons of different tongues and degrees of musical education were to pass through the organ loft of a church at long intervals and without any possibility of collusion, strike sixty-six notes which, when combined should yield the theme of an oratorio, it is respectfully submitted that the man who regarded that as a 'fortuitous circumstance' would by universal consent, be regarded as,—to put it mildly, still deficient in common sense. The conclusion from such a harmonious combination would be irresistible, namely, that one

controlling mind and that of a great tone master was behind it." (*Why I Believe the Bible*, p. 27.)

The unity of the Scriptures is patent to all. We cannot believe the New Testament without believing the Old; we cannot believe the Prophets without believing the Law. We cannot believe Christ without believing His Apostles.

There is an amazing unity of theme. We speak of the Bible as the revelation of God to man, but it is primarily and specifically the revelation of God's redeeming love to man. The two great words of Scripture are "sin" and "salvation." From Genesis to Revelation there runs the glorious theme of God's redeeming grace. The Bible is the story of God's purpose and plan to bring man back to Himself, and of how, through His chosen people, He unfolded that purpose until in the fulness of time His only begotten and well beloved Son came to be the Redeemer of mankind.

The completeness of the Bible is proof of its inspiration. All that man needs to know concerning doctrine or ethics is to be found in the Word of God. All is there for our "completeness." The Apostle Paul in writing to Timothy said: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:14-17.)

Revelation is consummated, but not closed, in Christ. The Bible will have no other books or portions of books added unto it. The canon is closed. But John Robinson was right when he declared to the Pilgrim Fathers who were leaving the old country for the new: "I pray you to remember that new light will be ever breaking forth from the Word of God." Reverent scholarship and obedient lives will mine new nuggets of truth from the sacred storehouses of the inspired Word from generation to generation.

The message of the Bible is proof of its inspiration. The sacred oracles of all other religions record the quest of men after God, but the Bible is a record of God in Christ seeking and finding man and lifting him up into fellowship with Himself. How account for the monotheism, the doctrine of one God, in the Scriptures unless they are inspired? Surrounded by polytheism, how do you account for the pure monotheism of God's chosen people? Intellectually, the Greeks were far in advance of the Hebrews, but religiously they could not approach the grandeur and purity of the religious system that was brought forth through the Hebrew people. As Dr. James R. Kaye says: "How account for this marvellous, this outstanding exception that presented not simply what was different but what was absolutely true as opposed to the absolutely false?" (*New Analytical Bible*, Intro., p. 14.)

The system of doctrine set forth in the Holy Scriptures is a coherent system whose vital truths are held together like the links of an anchor chain. It is the story of how God in Christ reconciled the world unto Himself. "The Bible presents to us a panorama of the

divine purpose. As we look, we see the unfolding of the great drama of sin and salvation. As we listen to this majestic music from the Creation overture in Genesis to the Hallelujah Chorus in the Apocalypse, we realize that we have been holding in our hands the inspired libretto of God's great oratorio of Redemption." (Patton: *Fundamental Christianity*, p. 173.)

CHRIST APPROVED THE BIBLE

Christ put the seal of His approval upon the Bible. He was evidently familiar with it from His youth up. He must have committed great portions of the Old Testament to memory and saturated Himself in the Law and the Prophets. He not only knew the Scriptures, He believed them. There is nothing to indicate in anything that Christ said that He doubted or disbelieved the Holy Scriptures. He spoke of them as the Truth and as the Word of God. Christ both preached the Bible and practiced it. When He stood up in the synagogue in Nazareth and opened the Scriptures, He took as His text: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Isa. 61:1-2).

Christ quoted from the Scriptures to discomfit His enemies and those who sought to discredit His message or to undermine His influence. He unhesitatingly used the Scriptures as the sword of the Spirit when

attacked by the tempter, and throughout His life met the assaults of the Evil One with the Word of God. He staked the integrity and success of His whole redemptive work upon its truthfulness. Time and again He urged men to "search the Scriptures; for . . . they are they that tell of me." Having risen from the dead, when walking to Emmaus, He was met by the two disciples. He caused their hearts to burn within them when He declared: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24:25-27.)

Christ stood for the truthfulness of those things which higher critics of every generation have scoffed at or have rejected. Such facts as the creation, Adam and Eve, Jacob's ladder, Moses' burning bush, the great flood, the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the healing power of the brazen serpent, the account of Lot's wife, the experience of Jonah three days in the belly of the great fish, Elijah raising the widow's son, and other events recorded in the Old Testament. He took His stand with those who accept the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch when He said, "Did not Moses give you the law?" Christ put His distinct imprimatur upon the historical portions of the Old Testament. Some points disputed in other years as well as mere historic facts that were openly denied have been proven to be true by archeological research. The spade has turned up the evidence, and

facts which higher critics said could never have taken place have been proven true.

Modern archeological evidence is convincing proof of the historicity of the Bible and of its inspiration of God. Important facts the higher critics of the Bible said were not true and could not have happened, have been proved to be historically true. Large sections of the Word of God which were claimed by destructive critics to be myths, legends, and even forgeries have been proven to be history and exactly what the Bible claimed. The spade has routed the critics and restored the faith of many who had become unsettled.

Archeology has convincingly proved that the religion of Israel was not a result of evolution but of revelation and that the earliest religion of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and other Near East countries was the purest and most free from animism and polytheism. The unearthing of the ancient city of Ur of the Chaldees, whose very existence had been denied by certain critical scholars, is one of the thrilling romances of modern archeological history, and another proof of the historicity of the Scriptures. This supports the Bible account of the flood. The discovery of ancient Hebrew alphabetic writing about the time of Moses destroys the assumption of the critics that the supposed historical inaccuracies of the Pentateuch were due to the fact that writing was unknown in those days. Professor Garstang's excavations at Jericho have definitely established the fact that Joshua took the city about 1407 B.C. and have confirmed the account of Joshua in many respects. The evidence of archeology

is overwhelmingly on the side of the Bible and establishes conclusively the truthfulness and accuracy of the inspired Word of God.

THE ENEMIES OF THE BIBLE

The reason why the Bible has had such persistent and virulent enemies through the years is because it reveals man as he really is and God as He truly is. Natural man, sinful man, unrepentant man, opposes God.

There is a necessary and true criticism of the Bible. Every student of Holy Scripture is a higher critic in the truest sense of the word. Christianity is a reasonable religion. There is nothing in Christianity that is contrary to reason. There is much in it that is above reason, but nevertheless reasonable. Reverent scholarship has done much to reveal, interpret, and vindicate the truth of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. The Bible fears no honest investigation. Honest and reverent criticism has enlarged our knowledge and appreciation of God's Holy Word.

But there is a destructive criticism of the Bible, issuing from those who have a controversy with God. Their spirit and method is one of destruction. They are like the vivisectionist who invades the domain of life and leaves behind only the dead parts. That kind of critic will never arrive at the truth. His attitude is wrong. One day a man stopped before a taxidermist's shop, and, looking at an owl, said: "That owl is not stuffed right, its head is not on right, its body is not poised right, and the feathers are not fixed right. If I could not stuff an owl better than that, I would go

out of the taxidermist business." Just then, the owl moved. He had criticized a live owl. The Word of God lives. It was not given for criticism, but to show the way to everlasting life. To the honest seeker after truth it will prove itself to be the living Word of God.

Dr. R. A. Torrey says: "Man's hatred of the Bible has been of a most persistent, determined, relentless and bitter character. It has led to eighteen centuries of repeated attempt to undermine faith in the Bible and to assign the Bible itself to oblivion. Every engine of destruction that human philosophy, human science, human reason, human art, human cunning, human force and human brutality could bring to bear against a book has been brought to bear against this Book and yet the Bible stands absolutely unshaken today. At times almost all the wise and great of the earth have been pitted against the Bible and only an obscure few, for it. Yet it has stood. At times men have fancied the Bible had gone down, but when the smoke had cleared away from the field of battle, there it stood, not one stone shaken and the fierceness of the assault only serving to illustrate again the impregnability of the citadel."

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.
"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out you know."
And so, I thought, the Anvil of God's Word

For ages, skeptic blows have beat upon,
Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unharmed,—the hammers gone.

The very desk on which Robert Ingersoll wrote much of his infidel literature fell into the hands of a great Bible student who has sent Christian literature throughout the world. The more the Bible is fought, the more it endures and the wider its influence. Why? If man wrote it like the flower of the field it would fade away. Being the Word of the Lord, it abideth and endureth forever.

THE BEST KNOWN BOOK IN THE WORLD

The greatest book in all the world is the Bible. It has persisted throughout the generations, constantly growing in influence and power. It is said that out of every thousand publications six hundred never pay the cost of printing; two hundred just pay; one hundred yield slight profit; only a few are profitable. Those who are in a position to appraise the remarkable output of books declare that six hundred and fifty out of a thousand are forgotten within a year, one hundred and fifty more in three years, and less than fifty out of a thousand survive seven years.

The Bible is the "best seller" of all books. Notwithstanding the increasing attacks on it, the Book of God continues on its way with growing impetus, reaching tens of millions and being read by all types and kinds of people in nearly a thousand dialects and languages. A recent novel has rolled up the unprecedented fiction

record of 1,600,000 copies in Europe and America, but the presses of the world have turned out Bibles to an estimated total of as high as 36,500,000 in a single year. What book is so universal, so loved, so highly prized, so popular, so useful throughout the world?

Dr. Arthur T. Pierson has well said: "The Bible is the greatest traveller in the world. It penetrates to every country, civilized and uncivilized. It is seen in the royal palace and in the humble cottage. It is the friend of emperors and beggars. It is read by the light of the dim candle amid arctic snows. It is read in the glory of the equatorial sun. It is read in the city and country amid the crowds and in solitude. Wherever the message is received, it frees the mind from bondage and fills the heart with gladness."

Voltaire prophesied that he would give the Bible just a hundred years to run its course and be forgotten. Today in the very spot where he wrote those words, a Bible Society has its headquarters and is dispensing the Scriptures to all the world. It is an interesting contrast that not long ago the ninety-two volumes written by Voltaire, and which were in the possession of the Earl of Dudley, sold at auction for eight shillings, about two cents each. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (I Pet. 1:24-25).

CHAPTER II

THE PERSON OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST

THE Christian faith centers in a Person. It is inextricably bound up with Jesus Christ. Christianity is Christ. Its focal points are not doctrinal or ethical, but personal. The great battles of thought and faith have been and are today fought about the Person of Jesus Christ. The supreme question of life is the question that Jesus asked: "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" (Matt. 22:42.) It is the question of the centuries; it is the question of the hour. What we think concerning the Person of Jesus Christ determines what we think of Christianity.

The simplest fact about Jesus Christ as He is set before us in the Gospels is that He was a man. Whatever there was that was unique and peculiar about His Person, "it did not destroy the reality of His humanity or take Him out of the genus 'man'." The doctrine of the humanity of Christ is as essential a part of the Christian faith as the doctrine of His Deity.

Dr. R. A. Torrey has said: "I thank God that my Saviour is One who made the heavens and the earth, and who holds all the powers of nature and of history in His control; but I equally thank God that my

Saviour is my brother man, one who was tempted in all points as I am. One who is in a position to bear my sins; on the one hand because He is God, and on the other hand because He is man. A merely divine Saviour could not be a Saviour for me. A merely human Saviour who is at once God and man, is just the Saviour I need and the Saviour you need, a Saviour that is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him." (*Fundamental Doctrines of Christian Faith*, p. 111.)

"The Word was made flesh," that is, became a person, a true man, a real human being. There are a number of people who do not see the Deity of Jesus Christ. They are in real error. There is another large class of people who see only His Deity and who do not see the reality of His manhood. They also are in grievous error.

Let us consider the human parentage of Jesus Christ. In Luke 2:7 we read, "And she brought forth her first born son." Here it is stated that Jesus Christ, though supernaturally conceived, was Mary's son; that is, Mary was as truly His mother as God was His father. Not only was Jesus Christ descended from Mary, and thus from human parentage, but we are told in Romans 1:3 that God's Son "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." In Galatians 4:4 we read that "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son." We are also told with equal plainness in the same verse that this Son of God was "made of a woman." As someone has said: "The human parentage of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was just as real and just as essential a part of

His personality as His divine parentage." The Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church puts it this way: "The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God became man and so was, and continueth to be, God and man, in two distinct natures and one person, forever."

The Church has always held the doctrine of the supernatural conception and Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ. There have been those in every generation who have taken the position that the Virgin Birth is not important and that, whether you hold to it or not, it does not in any real way affect Christian faith or doctrine. Why is it then, that belief in the Virgin Birth has so often been a focal point of criticism and discussion? In recent years the battle has raged rather furiously over the Virgin Birth. Sometimes in great military operations, when even the fate of a nation may be hanging in the balance, the importance of holding some little hilltop or of preventing the enemy from passing over an insignificant stream may eventually determine the tide of battle and who is to win the day.

I am aware of the fact that there are devoted Christian men who honestly believe that a true belief in the incarnation of our Lord is not affected or imperiled by disbelief in the Virgin Birth. There has also been a tendency in some quarters on the part of young men seeking ordination at the hands of the authoritative body of the Church, not to deny the Virgin Birth, but rather to express a doubt as to it or to affirm the relative unimportance of it. When the doctrinal standards of a given church affirm belief in the Virgin Birth, it seems to the writer to be beside the point to proceed

to ordination, however honest the applicant may be, if he cannot definitely and clearly affirm his belief in the Virgin Birth. In a church that has such standards it is not only a matter of policy but of honesty for the applicant to wait until he is clear and can meet such requirements before the authoritative body proceeds to his ordination.

There have always been those outside the Church who have denied the doctrine of the Virgin Birth as well as other doctrines of the Christian faith. In our day, however, the chief attack has come from within the Church. Those who do not believe in the Virgin Birth not only deny the authority of God's Word but face an alternative that is not worthy of the mother of Jesus. There are those today who affirm the supernaturalness of Christ's life, His sinlessness, His mighty works, His death, and His resurrection, but who deny the supernaturalness of His coming into the world. That seems an illogical position for anyone to take. How much more natural and logical would it be to affirm the supernatural conception and Virgin Birth of our Lord. That would be in harmony with all the other supernatural aspects of His Person, in which they believe.

It is significant that through the centuries evangelicals have accepted the Virgin Birth of Christ as definitely revealed in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and hold it to be as well authenticated as the record of the Sermon on the Mount or any other part of the Gospel message. To repudiate the nativity story and make Jesus Christ the son of Joseph or of a Roman soldier is to do violence to the whole picture

that we have of the Person of Jesus Christ, as well as to deny the accuracy and reliability of the Word of God.

Jesus' life was lived in the stream of human events, down in the dust and dirt of things, on the firing line of life, and it was out where men live and suffer and experience life that He "won His spurs" as the victor over temptation and as the Captain of our salvation. There was not a single moment when He yielded to temptation in thought, desire, word or act. Nevertheless, in His temptations, He overcame them in the same way that we may overcome them, by the Word of God, prayer, and obedience.

Jesus' true humanity was seen in His human affections. He rejoiced with His friends when they rejoiced, and He wept when they wept. One day, when Jesus saw Mary and the people who had come with her weeping because of the death of her beloved brother Lazarus, we read that "Jesus wept." As the "Man of sorrows," He entered truly and intimately into the bereavement of that Bethany home where He was often a guest and where He was so truly loved. But there is more than sorrow in His tears. A more correct rendering of the original would be, "He was moved with indignation."

It was His moral indignation at Satan and His Kingdom which had the power of death and which had come into the world because of sin, that called out His antagonism to the enemy and His essential resentment that His Father's perfect plan for human life should have been so harmfully invaded. What a fine illustration it is of His marvellous sympathy and identifica-

tion with the sorrows and sicknesses of His brethren. It was the sufferings of others, if you will, that kindled His indignation as well as His compassion. The confusion, the pain, the anguish caused by death had no part originally in the divine order of the world.

With what understanding and appreciation do we enter into the meaning of what the writer to the Hebrews meant when he said: "For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. . . . Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Heb. 2:11, 17.)

His prayer life was that of a man. He obtained the power for His life and work, not by His incarnate Deity, but by prayer, meditation, and obedience. Twenty-five times it is mentioned that He prayed. He obtained power for moral conquest and for spiritual achievement by the use of those means which are open to believing men today. He was subject to human conditions for obtaining what He desired.

Dr. Francis L. Patton of Princeton summed up the fact of our Lord having a true human soul when he said: "Our Lord's life was as completely human as it was completely divine. He suffered; He rejoiced in spirit; He loved; He wept; He formed friendships; He used the language of indignation; He was tempted; He was made under the law; His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. If Christ had no human soul, these references would have no meaning. A human body is not a man. God in the garment of flesh and blood could not be called a man. If Christ had no

soul, He was not human and was not our brother.” (*Summary of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 44-45.)

The full humanity of Jesus is a truth of vital importance. All that is precious in Christian experience is involved in it. Christ must have been a real man in order that He might sympathize with us. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He won His spurs, may it reverently be said, on the firing line of life, out where the fighting was hottest, out where the battle raged most fiercely. He was touched with human feeling of our every infirmity, and yet came off more than conqueror.

Jesus Christ had a real human body. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Jesus Christ had a body, visible to the eye, giving the natural impression as other bodies do of reality. His body came into this life by the natural channel of birth. It grew as others did. Of Him as a child we read: “And the child grew” (Luke 2:40). One night He slept in a boat, and at noon one day he rested by a well and asked for water. His body was nourished by food; it was restricted by space as are other men’s bodies; it travelled about, became weary, and knew pain and suffering through the inhumanities of men. During the temptation He hungered. On the Cross He cried, “I thirst.” His body died, the indisputable proof to the most skeptical physician or anatomist being found in the testimony: “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34.)

He had a true body after His resurrection. He not only talked and ate with His disciples during that

period, but when He appeared to them and they were so terrified and affrighted, thinking that they had seen a spirit, he said reassuringly to them: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).

The Millennial-Dawnists (followers of Pastor Russell) and those who hold similar views tell us that this is not so. They claim, "that whereas before His incarnation He was wholly a spiritual being, at His incarnation He became wholly a human being, and that since His death and resurrection He is wholly a divine being. All of which is not scriptural, and therefore not true." (Torrey: *Fundamental Doctrines of Christian Faith*, p. 97-98.)

Jesus Christ ascended with a glorified human body and is exalted at God's right hand today in that body. The words of the old hymn carry a real truth,

"I shall know Him, yes, I shall know Him;
By the print of the nails in His hand."

It was Jesus Himself who said: "Nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64). Immediately after the ascension of Jesus, while the disciples were looking steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, "two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you

into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).

Is it very important that we believe that the Lord Jesus had a true, human body, that the Word was indeed made flesh? Not to believe it, the Apostle John tells us, is a mark of the anti Christ. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 John 4: 2-3).

Jesus Christ had a true human soul. This also has been denied, yet the facts are all against the denial and affirm the truth of the statement that Jesus Christ had "a reasonable soul." We read in Luke 2:52 that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." In the Temple He showed curiosity and the evidences of mental processes like those of other men. In His home in Nazareth He led a life of obedience.

The lower ranges of reasoning were followed by Him as by others and once He even expressed his thought syllogistically (John 8:47). But Dr. Frank Hugh Foster has pointed out that "the higher ranges of reason, the intuitive knowledge of the meaning of great truths were peculiarly his. Jesus Christ manifested at every essential point the possession of an intellect characterized by the same faculties and working by the same laws as our own." (Article, Humanity of Christ, in *Dictionary of the Gospels*, p. 754.)

His sensibilities were human. He had a proper love for esteem, which is manifested in His notice of the omission of certain acts of courtesy. (See Luke 7:44-46.) His will was moved by appropriate consideration just as ours is (John 12:27). On the human side, in the hour of temptation, he strives to maintain His spiritual ideals. Through "strong crying and tears" He resisted the enemy of man's soul. That He was really and actually tempted is undeniable. "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." This is clear and complete proof of the reality of His humanity, not only physical but mental and moral.

THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

The most important question that can be put to anybody is the question with which Jesus Christ confronted the Pharisees of His day: "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" (Matt. 22:42.)

This is the supreme question of life, the question of the centuries, the question of the hour, the most important question that a man is called upon to answer. The person who has the right answer to this great question will sooner or later have right views on every other question. The man who has a wrong view of the Person of Jesus Christ is rather sure to hold wrong views on nearly everything else sooner or later. When I was a boy, to say that you believed in the divinity of Christ meant that you believed He was God; that is, you understood it to mean His real Deity. It no longer means that. Satan is an angel of light and he leads men to use the old, magnificent terminology of the Christian faith, but at the same

time to put a different meaning into the old words. So men today preach about and write about the divinity of Christ, but they mean something quite different from what Christian people have always understood "divinity" to mean. Therefore, I choose to discuss not the divinity but the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The great question that confronts us is not whether Jesus Christ is divine, but whether Jesus Christ is God.

How could anyone who pretends to get his knowledge of Jesus Christ from the Bible—and that is practically the only place where we have any information about Him—think that Jesus Christ was only a man? Dr. Clarence E. Macartney reminds us: "How could any church have arisen which took as its foundation the non-deity of Jesus Christ? What will they do with the New Testament? By what strange process is it that they rule out the Son of God and leave us only Jesus of Nazareth? The only way I know of is by the way Thomas Jefferson did it: he just took his pen and ran it through the passages which spake of Christ as God, and through the miracles done upon Him or done through Him, through any passage which shows Him more than man. Thus deleted, his Gospel came to a close with the words 'And they rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre and departed'. That is the end of Jesus! And if that is all, then you have rolled a great stone to the door of the world's one and only hope. And upon what ground? Upon no ground whatever, for the only Christ is the Christ of the New Testament and that Christ was the Son of God." (Macartney: *Great Questions about Christ*, p. 86.)

The Deity of Jesus Christ is clearly declared in the Holy Scriptures. One sees it in the suggestions and explicit predictions of the Old Testament. The theophanies indicate the appearance of God in human form. Illustrations of this are seen in God's approach to, and revelation of, Himself to Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and others. The Messiah in the Old Testament is expressly declared to be the Son of God. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psa. 2:7-8.) In Psalm 110:1 David writes, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." In Matthew 22:42-43 Jesus uses these words to answer the Pharisees when in reply to His question as to who He is, they had said, "The son of David." "How then," Jesus replied, "doth David in spirit call him Lord?" This psalm directly affirms the full Deity of Jesus Christ.

His Virgin Birth was foretold as the means through which God could be Emmanuel. The Messiah in the Old Testament is invested with the names of Deity. As in Isaiah 9:6, "his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Names and titles clearly implying or affirming His Deity are used of Jesus Christ hundreds of times throughout the Bible. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right

hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last." (Rev. 1:17.) In Isaiah 44:6 we read: "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." Paul speaks of the crucified Jesus Christ as the "Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8). In Psalm 24:10 we read: "Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Paul tells us that Christ "is over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9:5). And in Hebrews 1:8 it is spoken of the Son, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom" (Heb. 1:8).

There are those who say, 'Yes, the Deity of Jesus Christ is set forth in the four Gospels, but I believe that this conception of Him is just Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John's idea of Him, and that they really gave to Jesus the exalted place that He now holds in the minds of men.' Do you think that four men such as these writers were could have invented the wondrous sayings of Jesus or could have created such a character as the sinless Christ? The greatest poets and dramatists of the world have never been able to do that. How then could we expect four sinful, limited, ignorant men to do it? A stream never rises higher than its source. Why did these writers of the Gospels give us such a figure as that of Christ and hand Him down through the ages to us? The answer is, Because they had the model before them, not fashioned by their minds but exhibited in life before them, in daily walk, conversation, and deed. They made faithful reproduc-

tion and copy of what they saw and heard; and because they were faithful in their copy of that which was perfect we today have the story of the sinless Man and the Saviour of all who have sinned.

Jesus Christ claimed to be God and equal with the Father. There are those today, generally known as Unitarians, or, if they do not bear the name, holding the Unitarian position, who sincerely believe in Jesus as the perfect teacher and prophet; who recognize His flawless life and seek to imitate and strive after His likeness, but who do not believe that He is God in the flesh, the very Son of God.

One day when He was on earth, Jesus turned to those who could not think of Him as the Son of God, and said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). Men today try to explain away the full and obvious meaning of these words; but the Jews, the Unitarians of His day, knew exactly what He meant, for they took up stones to kill Him because He had made Himself equal with God. Either Jesus was mistaken or He deliberately told what was false. If He is a perfect teacher of truth, He could not be mistaken. If He is what all admit Him to be, the perfect character and the sinless Man He could not have told a lie. Since men who will not acknowledge His Deity, openly acknowledge Him as the perfect teacher and the perfect man, then how can they escape the inescapable conclusion that He must be what He claimed to be, namely, the very Son of God. May those who have never acknowledged His real Deity bow, not only to the inevitable logic of it, but yield to the constraint of His redeeming love and have their doubts settled once

for all as they confess with Thomas, who once also had his misgivings, and cry, "My Lord and my God."

Bronson Alcott once said to Thomas Carlyle, that he could honestly use the words of Jesus, "I and the Father are one." "Yes," was the crushing retort, "but Jesus got the world to believe Him."

The claim of Jesus for Himself, as Dr. Griffith Thomas points out, was a fivefold claim:

He claimed to be the Messiah of the Jews.

He claimed to be the Saviour. "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

He claimed to be the Master of mankind. "Follow me," He said. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

He claimed to be the Judge of mankind. He alone is able to sum up all the best, to decide all the future, to weigh aright every motive, word, and deed, and to render flawless judgment.

Above all, as we have seen, He claimed the prerogatives of God.

Hear His claims:

"I am the Light."

"I am the Way."

"I am . . . the Life."

"I am . . . the Truth."

"I will rise again."

"I am from above."

"I came down from heaven."

"I am the resurrection."

"Ask in my name."

"Before Abraham was, I am."

"All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

In other words, Jesus Christ clearly and repeatedly affirmed His Deity. He claimed to be the "Adonai" of the Old Testament; He identified Himself with the Jehovah, "I am"; time and again He identified Himself with God the Father, not only revealing Him but claiming to be the same in substance with Him, equal in power and glory. He claimed and exercised the distinctive prerogative of God, the power to forgive sins. He asserted and actually demonstrated his omnipresence, His omniscience, and His omnipotence. He proved His mastery over nature and His complete insight into human nature. He accepted and approved the worship which is given to God alone.

The consciousness of Christ supports His tremendous claims. Some of the greatest minds in the world have devoted themselves to the study of this consciousness of Jesus. "To claim is one thing; to justify and vindicate the claim is another thing. Character and deeds must bear the strain of this stupendous claim to be unique in relation to God and man." (Thomas: *Christianity is Christ*, p. 20.)

Great writers in Germany, Great Britain, and other parts of the world realize that the consciousness of Christ is the foundation of these claims and if that is wanting then the claims themselves are baseless. One day during the Civil War a man came to President Lincoln with what he claimed was a bullet-proof vest. Mr. Lincoln after examining it was not convinced. "Put it on," he said, "and I will have a squad of soldiers

try it out." But the man declined the test. Now and then, here and there men have arisen with their claims to be the Christ, but in the test they have miserably failed. There are some irenic spirits who make the assertion that some of the teachings of Confucius are as pure and lofty as those of Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount. I do not believe that such a claim can be maintained, but even if it could be, the great difference still remains—Jesus Christ perfectly lived out His teachings.

Some years ago, in our student days, Robert E. Speer declared: "Let any of us set ourselves up to be divine and see how quickly we will fall down to the earth from any such pinnacle. Our own deeds would belie us and our own consciousness break down under the palpable falsehood. In Acre, Syria, the head of the Bahais, Abbas Effendi, has actually claimed to be God the Father on earth. But he simply could not carry it through. He could not bear himself Godlikely. But we look on the outer and even more on the inner life of Christ. It actually sustained the tremendous, world-upheaving claims that He put forth to be the unique, supernatural Son of the living God. . . . Men are finding in the inner thought of Christ and the inner life of Christ, in the integrity of it, the way in which He was able to carry through to the end these tremendous claims of His, a new argument for the truth and reality of these claims."

So we have to face and explain the divine consciousness of Christ. As Canon H. B. Ottley has accurately put it, this is the "Great Dilemma," and a dilemma which takes various forms. He sets forth the "Great

Dilemma" in these words: "Christ was sinless and yet was condemned as a malefactor. He was the truth and yet was condemned as a falsifier. He claimed to be a King, and yet was condemned as a traitor. He came fulfilling the law, and yet was condemned as a law-breaker. He was a worker of miracles, and yet was condemned as a sorcerer. He claimed to be a forgiver of sins, and yet was condemned as an impostor. He claimed to be God, and yet was condemned as a blasphemer."

Dr. Griffith Thomas expresses what is in our minds when he says: "Was ever a human being seen like this? A Man exemplifying the passive virtues combined with unique majesty. A Man challenging attention to His sinlessness and meekness, and yet obviously sincere. A Man claiming unlimited power, and yet ever expressing His dependence on God. A Man possessed of undaunted courage, and yet characterized by exceptional meekness. A Man interested in the smallest details of individual lives, and yet conscious of possessing universal relations with God and man.

A Man deeply impressed with the awful realities and consequences of human sin, and yet ever possessed by a sunny optimism which faced the facts and looked forward to sin's eternal destruction. A Man born and educated amid narrow and narrowing Jewish tradition, and yet characterized by an originality and a universality which rises infinitely above all national and racial limits. A Man of perfect humility, absolute sincerity, entire sinlessness, and yet all the while actually asserting Himself to be humble, sincere, and sinless." (*Christianity is Christ*, p. 25.)

As the late Bishop Gore in *An Appeal to Unitarians*, part of his Bampton Lectures, says: "If it is not superhuman authority that speaks to us here, it is surely superhuman arrogance." There is no middle path, for no intermediate position has ever been found tenable. Jesus Christ is either God or else He is truly undeserving of our thought and regard. The unique capacity, originality and quality of His intellect is proof of His Deity. Behold the intellectual greatness of Christ. Bishop Gore, in an earlier book, collected the leading opinions of scholars and students of Christ, from the second to the nineteenth century on His infallibility, and pointed out that none of them advanced the amazing intellectual powers of Christ as an argument for His supernatural origin. My reply to those who would believe that such a study of His mental characteristics would be irreverent is that they have "an irreligious solicitude for God." I desire here to express my great debt to Mr. George Wendling for his original treatment of the personality of Christ, especially His intellectual life, in his book, *The Man of Galilee*, which I have generously used.

The great intellects of the race stand out as sharp, towering peaks in vast mountain ranges of life, but the intellect of Jesus stands alone, unrelated, isolated, unique in supremacy.

The more one studies the mind of Christ and the towering superiority of His intellect, the more he realizes that here is not only the greatest teacher of truth the world has ever seen, but that there is no incongruity in His august and tremendous assertion, "I am . . . the truth." One truly observes that "The Man

of Galilee in His intellectual movement is as easy as God." There is an entire absence of effort about Christ's intellectual life. Buddha labors in a long process of meditation. Continuous effort marks his statements; Confucius likewise. As an intellectual force Mohammed is not comparable to either Buddha or Confucius; and many parts of the Koran are labored and childish. But when Jesus is exercising His most amazing powers He seems to be merely pursuing the even tenor of His way. How profound this word about Him, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned" (John 7:15). This Man was never taught anything. I recognize, of course, that Jesus as a natural, growing boy grew in wisdom and in favor with God and man, but I am not discussing either that growth or the development of His Messianic consciousness at this time.

In His thinking and speaking, note that He sustains the same relation to time that He would sustain if He were the Eternal One. The most penetrating observation Napoleon ever made was this: "Christ proved that He was the Son of the Eternal by His disregard of time; all His doctrines signify one and the same thing—eternity."

Again, His mind is the clearest and most lucid ever known. There is no speech in any language that equals His in transparency and directness. Renan says: "In going through the Gospels whenever we touch His words, we feel them vibrate." He is the only teacher who has ever appeared who can be sufficiently comprehended without any conscious effort of attention. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and

they are life" (John 6:63). As one has beautifully put it: "They hang like banners in the air." There is very little, if any of logic, mathematics, metaphysics, the element of time, in Christ's intellect. A perfectly clear intellect reaches its conclusions without the aid of logic. A perfectly clear intellect attains its end unaided by mathematics. A perfectly clear intellect can comprehend its own operations without the use of formulas. A perfectly clear intellect sees the whole field instantly, and has no need of time. A perfectly clear intellect is Godlike, and Jesus Christ has the only perfectly clear intellect that has ever been known among men.

There are other amazing mental characteristics in Christ not found combined in anyone else. He never had a shadow of doubt or uncertainty about anything. Moses, Elijah, Buddha, Mahommed, Pascal, Luther, Calvin, Swedenborg, Wesley—all had periods of uncertainty and misgiving. He never conjectures. He never balances the probable and the improbable. He has no sense that for Him there is any mystery in life or nature, man or God. He has no sense of mystery in the presence of the infinite. He has no intellectual curiosity. The whole universe and all its secrets are an open book to Him. He speaks with the uncompromising authority of eternal knowledge. He is never surprised. He never entertains any suspicions. He never takes counsel with Himself or others. He had wisdom without reflection. He is never hurried. Balzac, whose amazing insight was equal to that of Shakespeare, says: "The man of the highest genius does not display genius at all times. *If he did, he would be like to God.*"

Jesus had a marvellous penetration or insight into

character. "He knew what was in man." He saw through people.

Think of the astonishing mental power which gave such piercing glances into the future, such a long look ahead into the centuries; yes, into eternity. He never mistook the future. He said He would disturb the very foundations of human society for ages to come. Has He not done so? He told His immediate followers they would be hated, persecuted, and killed. So history writes it down. He said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." In each generation countless millions have gathered around the Cross.

Note the amazing comprehensiveness of His mind. Great minds, like Jonathan Edwards the American, Schleiermacher the German, Bossuet and Fénelon the Frenchmen, Dante the Italian, Butler and Bacon the Englishmen, Chalmers the Scotchman—none match Him in this respect. He never said or did a needless thing.

In the truest sense of the term, Jesus is the only *original* thinker of whom the world has any record. Roman in His authoritative manner and Grecian in the breadth of His sympathy, but intellectually He is absolutely independent. Study the minds of all the greatest of every race and generation. Each is limited and none is universal. The intellect of each reflects what is current in the thought of the age in which he lives, and in the thought of the preceding ages, but He says: "Ye have heard it said . . . but I say"; "These sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock"; "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall

not pass away." What other teacher in all the world rests his own authority on his own assertions?

Measure His mind, and the workings and product of His intellect over against God. Where can we find in the universe a being with whom to compare Him but the great Creator Himself? George Wendling, in his *Man of Galilee*, has this illuminating statement as to the greatness of Christ's intellect: "The meditations of Marcus Aurelius, the teachings of Aristotle, the tragedies of Aeschylus, and the dialogues of Plato touch the highest points reached by the intellects of the ancient world, but in comprehensiveness and power how far below the Galilean all of them are! This is . . . the judgment of the intellectual giants of our race. Bacon, Kepler, Newton, and Locke have bowed their lofty minds in recognition of His high superiority. Immanuel Kant confesses His supremacy. Hegel and Leibnitz, and a whole multitude of the profoundest thinkers, acknowledge his preeminence. The Calvinist, the Arminian, the Roman Catholic, and the Swedenborgian, find in His utterances material for whole libraries."

To the Unitarian He is the very greatest of men; to the rationalist, German, Russian or American, He is always a perpetual mystery; to the leaders of all non-Christian religions He is unique and in a class by Himself. "To one great thinker He is a dreamy mystic; to another, a practical philanthropist; to one philosophic historian He is the key to all history; to one of the guiding spirits of the French Revolution He was the Child of Humanity." What is He to you? What is He to the university professor? What is He to the stu-

dent? What is He to any thinking man or woman? Those who pride themselves on intellectual things should come to Christ and know real intellectual supremacy.

This Christ bids us all to "love the Lord our God with all our mind." Those who are not mere intellectual boasters or dribblers or dishonest men will seek truth anywhere. Why neglect the supreme fountain of truth? "I am . . . the truth." "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "Behold the man!"

I believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ because of the teaching that fell from His lips. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." This Man speaketh, not as the scribes, but with authority. When the Pharisees and chief priests sent officers to apprehend Him, yes, arrest Him, and bring Him to them, they went, listened to Him, and returned empty-handed, declaring, "Never man spake like this man." Dr. Campbell Morgan, one of the most profound students of Christ's teachings, has said: "The words of Christ were not the words of a merely human teacher. . . . The greatest human teachers have always been reticent as to the ultimate authority of their teaching. They have always admitted there is room for interpretation, for question, for further investigation." (*The Teaching of Christ*, pp. 3-4). The greatest scholars of the University of California are still busily engaged in research, studying, investigating, searching, and theorizing in pursuit of truth. "This note is entirely absent from the teaching of Christ. There is no apology. He never said, It is natural therefore to

suppose; It may probably be; or, Consult the authorities." (*The Teaching of Christ*, p. 4.) Hear His own words about it:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Matt. 24:35. "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man. . . . And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man." (Matt. 7: 24-26.) "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John 8:51). "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12:49-50.)

Is there anyone, then, so bold as to defend the position that the character of Jesus Christ can be accounted for by evolution? Henslow in his book, *Christ no Product of Evolution*, says: "When evidence for a natural evolution of Christ, that is as he is portrayed for us in the Gospels, is looked for, none is forthcoming." Dr. Thomas declares: "If Jesus Christ was a

product of evolution, how is it that no better man has since appeared after nineteen centuries? Why should not evolution lead to a still higher type?" (*Christianity is Christ*, p. 14.) Men may well read today Horace Bushnell's great volume, *Nature and the Supernatural*, especially the chapter, The Character of Jesus Forbidding His Possible Classification with Man.

Robert E. Speer in an address at Northfield when I was a student at Princeton Seminary said: "We know that moral character is a duty of each one of us, and there is nothing in perfect moral goodness which our own conscience does not tell us we are bound ourselves to attain. And so I challenge you who believe that Jesus Christ was merely a man, to reconcile that belief with the fact that you are not a better character than He was. With nineteen hundred years of His influence upon the world, with advantages possessed by us such as He never dreamed of in His day, if Christ's character was purely human, it ought long ago to have been surpassed, and there ought to be in the world today many men and women who are superior in their character to Him. . . . If Christ was only a man, we are bound to surpass Him. If He was more than a man, we are bound to obey Him." (*Deity of Christ*, pp. 14-15.)

Jesus Christ is the only sinless Man who ever lived on this earth. His enemies witnessed to His sinlessness. Pilate could find no fault in Him, and in reply to the question, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" no one was able to say a word. David Strauss once said that Jesus Christ had a "conscience unclouded by the memory of any sins." His friends bore testimony to

His sinlessness. He lived with His closest followers three years and not the slightest shadow of failure or weakness fell across their pathway. "He did no sin."

Then there is the testimony of His own life. "He was not only separate from sinners but distinct from saints," says Dr. P. Carnegie Simpson. He was never penitent about anything, and never sought the forgiveness of God. He prayed: "Father, forgive them," but never, 'Father, forgive Me.' In the sacred books of other religions, the founder is never represented as being sinless. No man invented the idea of a sinless man. Jesus Christ and His life in the world, brought the idea of a Sinless Man to men. Dr. Speer rightly says that, if you can believe that this character was merely human, you are a very credulous soul. To believe that this character was merely human involves far more strain upon human faith than the simple conviction that we can account for the character of Christ by believing Him to be what He claimed to be, the Son of the Living God.

The mighty works He did establish His Deity. The whole question of the supernatural is involved in any adequate consideration of Christianity. I do not feel that we are far amiss when we say that it is the central issue of controversy in our generation. In the last analysis, the basic issue between real Fundamentalism and real Modernism is this question of the supernatural. Is the Bible, is Christianity, is Jesus Christ, the product of supernatural revelation or of natural evolution?

There has been a growing tendency to view every exceptional event or unusual occurrence as a "miracle." On the other hand there are those who declare that

practically everything is a miracle. But if all natural events are real miracles, then the supernatural is reduced to the natural, and there is really no miracle in the true meaning of the word. The radio is a "scientific miracle," but it is only a discovery of God's natural forces and laws and how they may be applied to certain ends. A real miracle is something radically different. It is the intervention of God, outside the sphere of nature, and in a very real and distinctive way. Those who reject the supernatural deny real miracles, and thus criticize or reject the record of such as they are found in the Scriptures.

The influence of science and the reign of law have so affected many people that they have come to believe that everything in the world proceeds by a fixed law of cause and effect and that interference from without is impossible. Those persons who lay down the premise that there can be no miracles reject the Bible as untrue wherever it records miracles. How unscientific is this method. True science takes all the facts into account whether they agree with one's pre-suppositions or whether they astound and amaze by the unexpectedness of what is presented. The true scientific attitude faces the fact of miracle just as truly as it faces the fact that is not miracle.

Is it not natural to suppose that, given a God who brought the universe into existence, He could within His own will and wisdom, intervene in the life of that universe for the highest ends, even though ordinarily it was moving in obedience to the laws which He had willed for it. Here is a great city street, thronged with people and crowded with traffic. Laws have been made

and issued to govern the flow of that traffic. Officers, the representatives of the law, stand at every congested corner. The green signals flash on and the roar of the traffic sweeps by. The law and the officers of the law have authorized this. Suddenly a child dashes across the street in the face of the law and the tide of traffic. Quick as a flash, the officer, the incarnation of the law, raises his hand though the green light still shines. There is a grinding of brakes, while the officer himself reaches down and gathers the child into his arms, saving it from injury or death. Can anyone deny that the officer did not have the right or the power to intervene? The lawgiver is always greater than the law that he makes. The supernatural God for the welfare of His children rules in His universe, not only unto the saving of their lives, but for the redemption of their souls.

The Bible contains the record of miracles. Is it strange that criticism should have been directed at the Bible? One of the chief reasons the Bible has been the center of attack is due to the fact that it records the workings of a supernatural power. Professor Orr declares: "Everyone will concede to Dr. Sanday the uniformity of the ordinary course of nature. If it were otherwise, we should have no world in which we could live at all. The question is not, do natural causes operate uniformly? but, are natural causes the only causes that necessitate or operate? For miracle, as has frequently been pointed out, is precisely the assertion of the interposition of a new cause; one, besides which the theist must admit to be *vera causa*." (Orr: *The Resurrection of Jesus*, p. 51.)

The theory of evolution is the effort to explain nature on a naturalistic basis as opposed to a supernatural basis. A miracle is not only something which is outside the experience of those who witness it, but it is intended to reveal the character of God. "But what about the actual miracles that the Lord Jesus Christ performed? These all come under the same category as those of the Old Testament. Not one was performed for sensation or show. Every one was an act of kindness and love, healing, feeding, raising the dead, calming the storm. Only two were miracles in which judgment entered as well as mercy. . . . They manifested the Divine power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and constituted evidence of His Deity and of the truth of His claims. He begged the Jews to believe 'for the very works' sake'. They are throughout consistent with the nature and character of God and the principles on which He deals with men. Their true character is clearly shown by contrast with the silly sensational tales connected with the mediaeval saints." (Atkinson: *Is the Bible True?* pp. 85-87.)

People often ask the question, If there were miracles in New Testament times, why are there none now? It was perfectly natural that there should be miracles when Christ was on earth. Christ Himself is the great Miracle. His work of spiritual redemption and recreation would naturally be accompanied by evidences of the supernatural. It was the spiritual crisis and the spiritual climax in the history of the human race. Again, one would expect miracles at the beginning of the proclamation of the Gospel of the grace of God, so that it might be authenticated to man. The estab-

lishment of the Church of the living God in the world would call forth on the part of its Founder supernatural power and support. What may truly be called miracles in our modern days have attended the foundation of the Church in heathen lands. The development and continuance of the Christian Church today is a miracle. Weakness within and opposition without would truly destroy the Church if God were not in her, with her, and for her. The real Christian life is a miracle and is truly a mystery to the man who is purely "natural."

The Lord Jesus Christ did not perform His miracles to convince the unbelieving and gainsaying. We read in connection with His first miracle in Cana of Galilee that His disciples believed on Him. Please note that it was only His disciples that believed on Him. The others were apparently not impressed; they only drank the wine. At another time Jesus, when asked to give a sign or perform a miracle, declined to do so and said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Dr. Griffith Thomas says: "For us today the Person of Christ is the great Miracle, and the true line of thought is to argue from Christ to miracles rather than from miracles to Christ. . . . We are face to face with a supernatural Person and the question whether He could or did do supernatural works is, after all, not of the first importance. The supreme question is as to the Person Himself for 'a sinless Christ is as great a miracle as a Christ who can walk on the water.' The question of miracles has often been too widely separated from the question of the miraculous Person."

(*Christianity is Christ*, pp. 40, 42.) Yet it is perfectly natural to expect that Jesus Christ, being who He was, should perform miracles. Had he not done so, it would have been unnatural.

Again let us repeat, the Person of Christ is the great Miracle. In Him, who is full of grace and truth, God at a particular moment of time in the world's history intervened for the highest and holiest welfare of man.

The convincing fact of His resurrection and His triumph over sin establish His Deity. If He were only the best of good men He would have been honored as the greatest of martyrs if He had never come forth from the tomb. His resurrection vindicates His claims to be the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. (See chapter on The Glorious Resurrection.)

The rise and growth, the character and indestructibility of His Church in the world is evidence that He who brought it into being is none other than the Son of God. Such an institution could not have endured through the centuries except it had been founded on the rock of His Deity. The history of the Church, allowing fully for its faults and failures, is one long testimony to the Deity of its Founder. The nature and mission of the Church, its life and influence in the world, alike bear witness to that which is more than human in the Person of Him who brought the Church into being, who is its Head and Guardian, and who one day will present it, as He is Himself, without spot or blemish, faultless and full of glory.

The marvellous influence of Jesus Christ on all nations and races and on human life itself establishes His Deity in the minds of all thoughtful men. The trans-

forming achievements of the Gospel throughout the world, the victories of the Cross in every land, the permeating influence of Jesus Christ on all races and kinds of men, testify to the far-flung influence and divine power of Jesus Christ. Millions have been reclaimed from ignorance, superstition, and sin. Social health and happiness have followed in His footsteps, the basis of world peace and an enduring brotherhood is to be found in that growing host of every race and nation whose first loyalty is to Jesus Christ and whose collective fellowship has within it the seed of a world-wide Kingdom of God.

As Dr. Thomas has said: "Jesus Christ is doing more wonderful things today than ever He did when on earth, redeeming souls, changing lives, transforming characters, exalting ideals, inspiring philanthropies, and making for the best, truest and highest in human life and progress. Why should Jesus, the Jewish peasant of Nazareth have become the founder of a religion which has shown and is showing its power to become a universal religion? The only adequate explanation of His work is the Christian explanation of His Person—He was God manifest in the flesh." (*Christianity is Christ*, p. 96.)

What think ye of Christ? Have you ever had the experience that as you began to think about Christ you found He was thinking about you? Did you ever sit down to examine Him, and suddenly come to the realization that He was examining you? You are asking yourself what you think of Christ, and a voice, still but insistent, whispers to your spirit and says, "What will you do with Jesus that is called the

Christ?" You may examine Jesus Christ with intellectual impartiality, but you cannot examine Him with moral neutrality. There He stands, a fact of history, but suddenly He has become a part of you, for He is a fact before your conscience. What shall I do with this Man? And you are face to face with the great choice of life, the supreme choice.

If you want to be a coward and turn away from Him and walk in the other direction, whether you pass through the greatest universities or work with your hands in the most humble station, Christ forever will remain for you just a fact of history, someone who lived nineteen hundred years ago. But if you heed that voice, if you yield to that call, if you come with Him according to the light you have, if you lay your will alongside His will, that fact of history, now a fact before your conscience and soul, will blossom forth into a glorious fact of spiritual experience. The Christian religion is life, not history. But it sprang out of history, is developed in conscience, then blossoms in one's soul, and bursts forth into glorious life in the lives of all who receive the Christ.

I want to bring into the witness box those who have helped many to make up their minds as to who He is, and as to what they will do with Him. 'Pilate, what do you think of this man?' 'I find no fault in Him at all.' 'Judas, you who betrayed Him for silver, have you some fearful charge to hurl at Him?' 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.' 'Centurion, you who nailed Him to the Cross, what is your testimony concerning this One?' 'Truly this was the Son of God!' 'Demons, you know His power; what is your

word?' 'This was the Son of God.' 'John the Baptist, what is your witness?' 'Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' 'And John?' 'He is the bright and morning star.' 'Peter, you who denied Him three times?' 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' 'Thomas, you were in doubt a long while; what is your testimony?' 'My Lord and my God!' 'Paul, you who persecuted Him and havocked His Church, what do you think of Christ?' 'I count all things lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.' 'Angels in heaven, what is your testimony?' 'Unto you is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' 'And our Heavenly Father?' 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him.'

The testimony is overwhelming as to the Deity of Jesus Christ. Men do well to heed that evidence, to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the only Son of God, and through believing to find life abundant and eternal.

CHAPTER III

THE ATONING CROSS

ONE of the inescapable facts of human life is the fact of sin. The views that men entertain of sin largely determine the opinions that they hold in respect to the Atonement. It is impossible to deny or ignore sin. It is as universal as the air we breathe, and no nation or individual is untouched by its bane and blight. Sin is in the blood stream of the human race. Its qualities spread as color spreads in water. Sins are many, but sin is one. There are numberless blades of grass and each is separate, but beneath the roots all are interwoven into a tough unity. Expressions of evil may be overthrown, but the root disease crops out in new forms. Sin is exceedingly sinful and must be reckoned with. The bridge builders in Kipling's tale would have been fools had they tried to accomplish their work by ignoring the steady, downward thrust of gravitation, or had shut their eyes to the destructive rage of the Ganges flood.

The moral judgment of mankind unanimously registers the fact of sin. The great religions of the world testify to it. However they may define it, they must take account of it. The governments of the world have to recognize sin and reckon with it. The wave of crime that has been sweeping over the United States has its

driving power in the evil hearts of sinful men. Not long ago the writer preached the Gospel in the great yard at San Quentin Penitentiary, where nearly five thousand men were milling about, fearful evidence of the reality and degradation of sin.

The literature of mankind bears witness to the sinfulness of human hearts and the tragic deeds that flow from this root evil of the human race. Our great poets and dramatists, as well as our essayists and writers of fiction, have dealt with this great fact of sin and the tragedies of life resulting from it. Sophocles has a striking passage in *Antigone*:

“Chorus: Alas for him who sees the right too late!

Creon: Alas! I have learnt it now.

But then upon my head some God had smitten with
dire weight of doom;

And plunged me in a furious course, woe is me!

Discomforting and trampling on my joy.

Woe! for the bitterness of mortal pain!”

A friend recently made a study of modern novels and was surprised to find that every one of them, however inadequately, dealt in their characters and situations with the sin question. All writers who ignore it may be entertaining, but they are not true interpreters of the human heart or of human experience. The consciences of men testify universally to the sinfulness of men. While conscience may acquit in specific cases, men generally know conscience as an accuser. Men are afraid of God and fear the face of man because of guilty consciences more than because of any other

thing. "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." The Holy Book of God is full of the unholiness of man. The Bible deals honestly and unsparingly with the fact of sin. It reveals man to himself, and uncovers the depravity of the human heart. The two biggest words in the Bible are "sin" and "salvation." Were there no Bible at all, man would know that he is a sinner. From the front page of every daily paper the fact of sin screams at us, and the deadly poison that is in the human race leaves its terrible trail across human hearts and society.

All men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The first three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans prove the universality of sin. God revealed Himself to man in the natural universe so that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world were clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. But mankind turned its back on God. The result was unspeakable sins. Men who had the moral law written upon the fleshy tablets of their hearts were no better. The best among the Gentiles were impenitent and unbelieving. The Jews had the revealed law of God but did not keep it and stood condemned by that law. The whole world is guilty before God. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12.)

What is sin? The answer that we give to this question will largely determine our views of the Atonement. Is it an unfortunate circumstance in the evolu-

tion of man from the lower orders of life to the higher? Can sin be adequately explained as a mere incident of growth, unavoidable and therefore not to be condemned, or hardly so? Is sin a mere misfortune, a disease which causes suffering, and that is all? The Word of God and the moral judgment of mankind maintain that sin is not moral weakness or sickness, but that it is to be condemned. Sin involves moral responsibility. The fact is that sin is a fault for which there is responsibility and just blame. The Word of God declares that sin is transgression, the breaking of law, the stepping over the boundary which God has fixed between good and evil. It is failure to do the known will of God. Sin is iniquity, an act inherently wrong, whether it is forbidden of God in law or not.

Probably the simplest and most common definition of sin is "missing the mark." Man was created to glorify and enjoy God, to do His will and serve Him with all his powers, but sin is abnormal. It is the unnatural, the opposite of that which God intended man to be. Sin is trespass, the intrusion of self-will into the realm of divine authority. Self-will is the root of selfishness. Under its impulse a man acts for himself and not for God or others. Sin is lawlessness. It is the spirit of lawlessness that is back of the wave of crime in our day. In the spiritual universe it defies God, challenges His ownership and governorship. It is opposition to His government and issues in spiritual anarchy. Sin is downright badness which should cause man to turn from it with hatred and fear. Sin is departure from standards that we know to be right. It is doing the lower thing, the unworthy thing, the

shameful thing. Sin is unbelief, the willingness to doubt the word of God, the feeling that God does not know what He is talking about, an insult to the divine veracity.

Dr. Scofield defines sin as, "An act, the violation of or want of obedience to the revealed will of God; a state, absence of righteousness; a nature, enmity toward God" (*Scofield Bible*, p. 1194). The shortest and truest definition of sin is: "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God" (Presbyterian *Shorter Catechism*, Question 14). We see that sin is something more than ignorance, more than a product of our environment, more than a result of hereditary influence, more than the dominance of body over spirit, more than pride of intellect. Sin is rooted in the will. Robert E. Speer once said in my hearing, "Sin is wrong will."

The difference between man's view of sin and God's view of sin is vividly stated by Dr. Gregory Mantle: "Man calls sin an accident, God calls it an abomination. Man calls it a blunder, God calls it blindness. Man calls it a chance, God calls it a choice. Man calls it a defect, God calls it a disease. Man calls it an error, God calls it an enormity. Man calls it a fascination, God calls it a fatality. Man calls it heredity, God calls it a habit. Man calls it an incident, God calls it an inclination. Man calls it an infirmity, God calls it an iniquity. Man calls it a luxury, God calls it a leprosy. Man calls it a liberty, God calls it a lawlessness. Man calls it a mistake, God calls it madness. Man calls it a peccadillo, God calls it a poison. Man calls it a relapse, God calls it rebellion. Man calls it a slip, God calls it a suicide.

Man calls it a trifle, God calls it a tragedy. Man calls it a thoughtlessness, God calls it a thralldom. Man calls it a weakness, God calls it a wickedness."

The Bible teaches the fall of man. Explorers and ethnologists tell us that among the lower tribes of the earth there are evidences that point to their belief that they have fallen from some higher and better life. And universally there is the effort through sacrifice to appease the gods and the powers that be. There is not space for us to discuss the recurring question, Where did sin come from? The account in Genesis does not answer this question, but begins with the coming of sin into the human race. Our first parents were tempted from without. Therefore evil must have been in the universe, and the fall and activity of Satan must be considered as more than assumption.

The third chapter of Genesis records the effects of the fall on our first parents, but what about the effect on the race as a whole? Some believe that Adam being a sinner begat children in his own likeness, that is, with corrupt natures; and that having these natures, they are under condemnation. Others believe "that there is a oneness of relation between Adam and his posterity so that what he did they did and what he suffered they shared. This oneness is by some held to be a realistic oneness, that is a oneness in the sense that we were actually in Adam when he sinned and actually committed the offence. By others it is held to be a federal oneness, that is to say that Adam was the representative of the race and what he did was accounted as being done by his posterity." (Patton: *Summary of Christian*

Doctrine, p. 36.) Because of relationship to Adam our natures are corrupt and every one of us has what is called "original sin." There are three main views of the effect of the sin of our first parents upon the human race.

Those who hold the Pelagian view believe that man is morally and spiritually well, that he has within himself the ability to do what he ought to do, and that he is not involved in Adam's sin except in the sense that Adam set a bad example. This view is opposed to the Bible and contradicted by experience. It is a fact that when human beings reach the age of responsibility they commit sinful acts. Men know what is right, but they lack the power to do the right.

Those who hold the semi-Pelagian view declare that man is sick and needs divine help. While Adam's sin is not imputed to him, nevertheless he lacks the power to repent of his sins and turn to God. If he only had the desire to repent and believe, all might be well. The Scriptures teach that that desire arises only under the influence of the Spirit of God.

Those who hold the Augustinian view believe that man is dead in sins and trespasses. Spiritually, he is unable to lift himself up by his own bootstraps. Man is totally unable to do anything to save himself. Because of the solidarity of the human race, the nature which all men have is like the corrupted nature of Adam. Dr. F. L. Patton points out that "this doctrine we believe to be true because it serves best to explain the universality of sin and its controlling power; because faith and repentance are spoken of in Scripture

as the gifts of God, and because the doctrine is more or less directly affirmed in the Scriptures" (*Summary of Christian Doctrine*, p. 33).

Total depravity does not mean complete deadness of conscience, or total absence of moral qualities, or that men may not possess naturally some kindly and commendable qualities. What it means is that "the entire nature of man mentally, morally, spiritually, physically is still affected by sin. 'The understanding is darkened,' (Eph. 4: 18—I Cor. 2:14). 'The heart is deceitful and wicked;' (Jeremiah 17:9, 10); 'The mind and conscience are defiled' (Gen. 6:5; Titus 1:15); 'Flesh and spirit are defiled' (II Cor. 7:5); 'The will is enfeebled' (Romans 7:18) and we are utterly destitute of any Godlike qualities which meet the requirements of God's holiness." (Evans: *Great Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 133.)

Sin brings terrible results in its train. It brings penalty. "The appointment of God that various evils for the sinner shall follow sin has been expressed in the nature of man and the world, and reiterated and re-emphasized in revelation. It is a universal appointment; and penalty is the universal outcome of evil-doing. Every form of sin has its own. Sin against love has its penalty as inevitably as sin against law. Sin against self has its penalty as truly as sin against the Holy Spirit. Secret sin has its penalty as surely as open sin. Penalty is correlative to the entire evil of sin in any or all of its forms." (W. N. Clarke: *Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 249.)

Sin brings guilt. Whether man is sensible of it or not, he is guilty before the bar of God. God is not

mocked. He is holy and His universe is holy and He cannot condone sin. He must deal justly and righteously with it. Awakened sinners know only in part how terrible a thing guilt is. God cannot wink at the wrongdoing of man. It is a fearful thing for a guilty soul to fall into the hands of the living God.

A condemning conscience often accompanies the penalty of sin. "Man is so constituted that sin naturally calls forth upon him the condemnation of conscience and the intolerable lashing of remorse. It is normal that a wilful sinner should be rendered inwardly miserable by feeling the blameworthiness of his sin." (Clarke: *Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 250.)

Sin brings penalty on personality itself. It is an offense against ourselves, against our own present well-being. All the laws of a man's being are God's laws, and to violate them is to sin against God. "God would build within us noble characters. When we sin we defeat His wish and make our characters ignoble and low. God would have us useful to others but sin makes us hurtful to them. God would have us happy; but sin makes us wretched, utterly and forever. God would have us grow in spiritual beauty, symmetry and power; but sin deforms, enfeebles and mars our being. Sin is a sort of moral suicide. 'He that sinneth against Me, wrongeth his own soul.' " (G. B. F. Hallock, *The Presbyterian*, Feb. 17, 1924.)

It is true that "the wages of sin is death." The significance of death is separation. Sin separates the sinner from his better self and his personality from his God. The human wreckage caused by sin may be seen in hospitals and asylums. Dr. S. Parkes Cadman spoke a

true word when he said: "Whatever loose thinkers may say concerning the gloomy recitals of preachers about the violation of God's laws, they have never yet surpassed sin's actual terrors and punishments for the guilty."

Sin brings its penalty in moral deterioration and in increasing powerlessness to combat the evil. It spreads like a rot in a bad apple. Evil grows like weeds and bad habits are as tenacious as cobwebs and as binding as steel rivets. Men find themselves caught as in a vice with their own resources unable to cope with the stronger power that has enslaved them. Only a higher power and a power outside themselves can set them free.

The soul that persists in sin may expect to go from bad to worse. There is an element of fixity of destiny in sin. "The evil that sin works for the sinner tends to endless continuance and the natural outcome of a wilfully evil life is final ruin to man" (Clarke: *Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 253).

God's Word declares that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Spiritual death is the result of sin in this life, and that means the separation of the soul from God. Eternal death is the penalty of sin in the life to come, and that means the separation of the soul and body from God forever. The only thing that can save man from his sin is that God Himself shall intervene. Man cannot atone for his sin. But, thanks be unto God, atonement has been made for sin by Jesus Christ, the spotless Lamb of God. If "sin" is one of the two big words of Scripture, then "salvation" is the other. How may man be saved from his sin and be

reconciled to God? How is it possible for God to be just and at the same time the justifier of sinful men? This leads us immediately into the great question of the Atonement and what God has done in Christ to reconcile the world unto Himself and to save men from their sins.

God took the initiative in our redemption. We are saved by grace and not by good works. Salvation is of pure grace. God's hatred of sin and His eagerness to save men from sin is seen in the way in which He has expressed Himself. His desire to protect man and to guard him against sin is seen in the sphere of nature and the moral order of the universe, in that sin is always followed by penalty. It is seen in the sphere of law. In the Law of Moses God was expressing His necessary hatred of sin. But in grace we see God's hatred of sin and His love of man in a fuller and richer way. Having tried every other means, at last He sent His Son. Grace is power. If men, dead in sins and trespasses, are to be made alive, God's grace must be power. Good advice, pure teaching, beautiful example, are not enough. The law cannot save dead men. "Law can do nothing but tell us what is right and what is wrong. . . . It cannot enable us to do the right and refuse the wrong which it has made known to us. But grace is power. It does not instruct; it energizes; and what dead men need is energizing, such energizing as raises the dead." (Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield: *Election*, p. 5.)

Grace is love. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Grace always expresses the idea of kindness, of unmerited favor, of goodwill, and

of love. The kindness of God is shown toward us in Jesus Christ. Grace is God's love dealing with sin and sinners. Grace is infinite love going the limit, spending and being spent that the loved object may be redeemed and restored. The grace of God cannot be earned. It is a free gift. We have nothing to do with it, for it comes to us entirely gratuitously. We do not deserve the love of God. Out of the pure kindness of His heart, and at infinite cost, God grants unto us the riches of His mercy and the benefits of His redemption. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

The grace of God is revealed in Jesus Christ who came into the world "full of grace and truth." But supremely is this grace manifested in the death of the Son of God for the sins of the world. The Atonement is the major fact in the Holy Scriptures. It holds the place of chief prominence. It has its vital relation to the incarnation of our Lord. Was He not manifested to take away our sins? The word was made flesh in order that man might be redeemed. Without a real incarnation there could have been no atonement. On the other hand, the Incarnation was for the purpose of making atonement for the sin of the world and reconciling man unto God. Just as a crimson thread runs through all the rope of the British navy, so redemption by blood is the central theme of Holy Scripture. The Atonement is emphasized in the Old Testament. From the beginning God impressed upon human beings the sacredness of the blood. The eating of blood was prohibited because the life of the flesh is

in the blood and because God had chosen the blood to be the symbol of life, to be substituted for the life of the guilty and offered as such in atoning sacrifice. This relation of the blood to the forgiveness of sin made it sacred.

In the Old Testament we see God, by figures, types, and sacrificial offerings, teaching His chosen people, through whom the Saviour of the world was to come, the fact and meaning of redemption from sin by the shedding of blood. We do violence to language if we say that the Old Testament sacrifices were not expiatory. The Book of Leviticus for instance, the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters particularly, clearly teach that the offerings were penal, vicarious, and expiatory. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11). "The meaning of all sacrifice is here explained. Every offering was an execution of the sentence of the law upon a substitute for the offender, and every such offering pointed forward to that substitutional death of Christ which alone vindicated the righteousness of God in passing over the sins of those who offered the typical sacrifices." (*Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 150.)

Levitical offerings "covered" the sins of Israel until, and in anticipation of, the Cross, but did not "put away" sins. Only Jesus could do that. "Atonement," as used in Leviticus, means only a "covering." It was not the Old Testament sacrifices, but the Cross, that made real atonement for sins. In the Old Testament days it was the blood of bulls and goats, spotless and without

blemish, however insufficient of itself, that God used for the purpose of covering human sin and which was the outward and visible means which the Holy One of Israel was pleased to use for reconciliation between Himself and His people. The Old Testament sacrifices enabled God to go on with the guilty people because they typified the Cross. To the offerer, they were both the confession of his desert of death and the expression of his faith. To God, they were the shadows of which Christ was the reality.

Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace, or wash away the
 stain;
But Christ, the Heavenly Lamb, takes all our sins away,
A sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they.

The death of Jesus Christ has its central outstanding place in the New Testament. He who was foretold in the opening chapters of Genesis to be the One who would bruise the head of the serpent now appears on the stage of human history as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Before His birth the angel announced that His name would be Jesus, "for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). The shadow of the Cross hung over Him throughout His life. Those who emphasize the value of His life more than the meaning of His death are inclined to say that Jesus had little to say about His death. But this is a mistaken and inadequate view.

In the early part of His public ministry, Jesus said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it

up" (John 2:19). To Nicodemus He declared: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14). Near the close of His Galilean ministry He referred to His "flesh" which He would "give for the life of the world" (John 6:51). Bible students are agreed that Jesus' teaching at Cæsarea Philippi about His death was crucial and marked a point of departure. We read, "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21). In His discourse on the Good Shepherd, He says: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. . . . As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (John 10:11, 15, 18.) The coming of the Greeks to Jesus led Him to say: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. . . . Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. . . . Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. . . . And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die." (John 12:23-33.) And to His disciples Christ said explicitly: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

The institution of the Lord's Supper, the agony in

the garden, and the character of the events that led to the Cross point unmistakably to Jesus' consciousness of His redeeming work and that He was fulfilling Scripture as the Saviour of the world. The heart of redemption is seen in Christ's own words which He uttered when instituting the Lord's Supper: "This is my body *broken* for you. . . . This is my blood *shed* for you."

In the system of Christian doctrine set forth in the Holy Scriptures the Atonement has the place of primacy. All other doctrines gather around it as the lesser satellites move in their orbits about the sun. The atoning Cross is the key that unlocks the hidden treasures of revealed truth.

The death of Christ is central in the preaching of the apostles. On the Day of Pentecost Peter pricked the hearts of thousands when he declared that "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). In the Name of this crucified and risen Christ they were commanded to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Before the Sanhedrin Peter boldly declared: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Peter in his epistles put the Atonement at the heart of his message: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). John declared in his epistle that: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son

to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Again John says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). At the very center of Paul's preaching was the Cross. The message and ministry of this master Christian and preacher are condensed in these glowing words: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). The whole world since Christ died is a world to which God has been reconciled. The Gospel is simply the declaration of this Atonement or reconciliation.

Christ Jesus did not primarily come into the world to teach truth, though never man spake as He spake. Those who follow Him shall not walk in darkness, and as men know the truth they shall be set free. But the teaching of Christ alone is insufficient to meet man's deepest need. Jesus did not primarily come into the world to heal the bodies of men. With compassion and power He ministered unto the physical ills of humanity. It is generally admitted, however, that His first work was the cure of souls even as spiritual sickness lies at the root of all other sickness. Christ Jesus did not primarily come to live the life of a saint. He was without spot or blemish, the chief among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. Those, however, who seek to imitate His life to find thereby the solution of their deepest needs will seek in vain. For who is able to walk in His steps and through imitation to be right with God? Christ Jesus did not primarily come to introduce a new social order. All true progress is related to Him, but social health and improvement have their roots in individual regeneration and transformation. Christ Jesus

primarily came into the world to die, to die as a Saviour for sinners, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have eternal life.

There are other views than the Scriptural views of Christ's death. What do we mean when we say that Jesus is the Saviour? Several years ago I read the manuscript of a book which had as its title *The Saviours of Mankind*. While Christ was given the highest place among the founders of religions, Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed, and other great religious leaders were also designated as being among the "saviours" of the world. The views that people have of Christ as Saviour may be as far apart as the poles. Just as there are different views of Christ as Saviour, even so there are different theories of the Atonement.

There is the martyr theory. This is held by those who look upon Christ as a mere man. He was a good man who went to His death because of His convictions and bearing witness to the truth. Christ's death was similar to the death of any martyr who laid down his life for his cause. But what a great difference there is between a good man dying, and Jesus Christ dying. Thousands of martyrs, both ancient and modern, have gone to death, strong and self-controlled and with words of victory on their lips. But Jesus Christ, dying on His Cross, cried out: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Is He less brave than the martyrs? Why should He be forsaken of God in such an hour? Why should He, the holiest of all, be denied the comforting presence of His God which was given to other martyrs? What is the difference between their deaths? The martyr dies with his soul safe and secure in the keeping

of the Saviour. But Jesus Christ died with the guilt and weight of the world's sin on His naked soul.

There is the governmental theory. God cannot condone sin. Therefore in Christ He, as the moral governor of the universe, gives an example of suffering to show men how much He hates sin. This theory of the Atonement makes us wonder why God did not take a sinful man rather than an innocent man to express His displeasure of sin. If that is all that was to be secured by an atonement, it was indeed a terrible mistake, and the height of injustice, that Christ the sinless One should have so suffered and died. In the governmental theory, Jesus' death only had teaching values. It gave to us merely the lesson of self-sacrifice. In this theory the Cross is only a symbol.

There is the moral influence theory. This means that Christ's death exerts a moral influence upon those who consider it and makes of them better men. Such a pure and unselfish life poured out in suffering and love cannot help but awaken the fulness of compassion in human hearts and lead men to be truer to themselves and to God. So the example of Christ's death leads men to change their ways, to repent of their follies, to turn unto the Lord. I ask, Is this true to the facts? Did the sight of His thorn-crowned head change the implacable hatred of the high priests? Did the faultlessness of His character give Pilate the courage to follow his convictions? Did His agonies on the Cross change the bitter taunts of the derisive crowd to deeds of sympathy and compassion? The belief that the human heart will love beauty, follow nobleness, and adore holiness if it is only presented to it, is exploded. The matchless Son of God,

full of grace and beauty and truth, was despised and rejected of men and nailed to the accursed tree. This theory fails to reckon with the fact and power of sin in human life.

There is the love of God theory, under two different conceptions. According to one Christ achieves our redemption by revealing God's love to us, while according to the other Christ reveals God's love to us by achieving our redemption. Those who hold this theory believe that the Cross is a revelation of the love of God. That is true, but it is more than that. Christ indeed died to show men how much God loved them. In the Cross, however, we behold a perfect love that paid the full price of our redemption. There we see God's love touching our lives at the point of their deepest need, getting under the guilt and shame of our lives, and setting us free from all that condemns and destroys. This kind of love we have seen in a mother's yearning after her wandering boy, and a father's love poured out for the sin of a wayward daughter, a friend laying down his life for the honor and good of his friend. It is true that in the Cross of Christ we have the supreme revelation of the heart of God, and behold the greatest love known to mankind. We are assured that God loves us with an everlasting love and with a love that will not let us go.

But it is not that love that primarily moves men to repentance. It is the fact that Christ there died for our sin and in His Cross forever removed it. Several years ago I sought to lead a man to Jesus Christ. His one answer was: "God loves me, and He won't be hard on me. Why is it necessary for me to accept Christ?" It was when he came to see that God's saving love was only in

Christ and in the Christ who died on Calvary making atonement for his sins, that he bowed in penitence at the foot of the Cross and received the Saviour.

There is the mystical theory. This is another subjective view of the saving work of Christ. What Christ did on the Cross produces a change in the conduct of the Christian. This change is the result of a mysterious union of the divine nature with the human. It is not an effect produced by the example of Christ, but in some strange way it is due to the believer sharing in the life of Christ. This view is popular today. All of these views are inadequate and contrary to the Scripture. They assume, as Dr. Patton says, "that God will pardon men on condition of repentance and reformation. . . . This view identifies salvation with good conduct but makes no provision for our deliverance from the bondage of sin. . . . It fails to do justice either to the guilt or to the power of sin." (*Summary of Doctrine*, p. 39.)

Contrary to these inadequate views, Christ's death is set forth in the Scriptures as a ransom. Jesus said: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). To give a ransom means to pay a price. When a ransom is paid and accepted, the deliverance of the captive is a matter of justice. Persons are ransomed when they are delivered, by a price paid, out of the hands of those who have seized them. Those who have been in bondage to sin have been set free through the death of Christ. "Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." (1 Cor. 6:19-20.)

The Scriptures likewise speak of this deliverance by purchase as redemption. "In whom we have redemption through his blood" (Eph. 1:7). This redemption is not by example or teaching or moral influence, but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures refer to the death of Christ as a propitiation. Remember that the sinner or his guilt is expiated; God or justice is propitiated. God has set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation for our sins through faith in His blood. Propitiation means mercy seat. The mercy seat covering the Ark of the Covenant was called a propitiation. When the publican in the temple smote upon his breast, saying: "God be merciful to me a sinner," he was not thinking merely of mercy but of the blood-strewn mercy seat. Because of Christ's death, the righteous God can pardon and justify guilty men and women. There is no thought in propitiation of placating a vengeful God, but of doing right by His holy law, and so making it possible for Him righteously to show mercy.

Several years ago, as I stood beside the grave of William Cowper in the beautiful Lincoln Cathedral, I thought of his years of despondency and melancholia when he was looking for light and relief. The story of his wonderful conversion is told in his own words: "I flung myself into a chair near the window and seeing a Bible there, ventured once more to apply to it for comfort and instruction. The first verse I saw was the twenty-fifth of the third of Romans. 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God'. Im-

mediately I received strength to believe it and the full beams of the Sun of righteousness shone upon me. I saw the sufficiency of the Atonement He had made; my pardon sealed in His blood and all the fulness and completeness of His justification. Unless the Almighty arm had been under me, I think I should have died with gratitude and joy. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder."

The Scriptures also set forth Christ's death as a reconciliation. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. . . . For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:19-21.) We also read: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10). God is never spoken of as being reconciled. It is the sinner who is reconciled through the blood of His Cross. The death of Christ removes the enmity between God and man, while at the same time it makes the alienated man a friend of God.

The death of Christ is supremely set forth in the Scriptures as a substitution. Every offering in the Old Testament days was an execution of the sentence of the Law upon a substitute for the offender, and every such offering pointed forward to the substitutional death of Christ. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . He hath poured out his soul unto death. . . . and he bare the sin of many." (Isa. 53:5-12.)

Christ bore our sins in order that we might not have to bear them. He died in our stead; that is, in place of us. He who knew no sin bore our sins in His own body on the accursed tree. This is substitution or vicarious suffering. What a substitute does for the person whose place he fills is vicarious, and it relieves or absolves that person from the necessity of doing or suffering the same thing. Christ is the sinner's substitute. He fulfilled the demands of the law in His own Person, and satisfying divine justice made it possible for God to be just and the justifier of all who believe in Him.

For all the world is nought and less
Than nought, compared with this :
That my dear Lord with His own blood
My ransom bought,
And I am His.

God's attitude toward sinful men is true to His essential nature. "God must be righteous and must be gracious. Neither love nor justice is optional and neither of them can be dispensed with. God's nature requires Him to hold and He does hold the attitude of perfect righteousness toward sin and toward sinners, and at the same time the attitude of perfect love toward His creatures, reaching out in divine helpfulness. He never swerves from holiness or is unfaithful to love. . . . As for God, He can do what is for us so difficult,—He can love the sinner while He hates the sin. All His love for men cannot alter His hatred of their sin and all the sin of the world cannot turn Him aside from loving men." (Clarke: *Outline of Christian Theology*, pp. 258-259.)

The vicarious death of Jesus Christ is made absolutely necessary because of two facts, the holiness of God, and the sin of man. How is it possible for a holy God to have beautiful and unbroken communion with sinful man? Or as Paul puts it, how may God be just and at the same time the justifier of guilty sinners? Low views of redemption inevitably are due to inadequate views of sin, while inadequate views of sin arise from unscriptural and unworthy conceptions of the holiness of God. How is it possible for God to maintain His holiness, the moral integrity of His universe, His standards of right and goodness, and at the same time have full friendship and fellowship with sinning men? He dare not, He cannot, He could not compromise His character or lower His standards. On the other hand, sin produces in man guilt, penalty, a polluted nature, a weakened will—all that which brings wrath, condemnation, and eternal ruin in its train. How can the eternal God, both righteous and loving, maintain His holiness, satisfy His justice, and at the same time redeem men from the curse of the broken law and from the penalty and power and eternal effects of sin? The answer is the atoning Cross of the Son of God.

Men are offended at the Cross because they have an inadequate sense of sin. The modern world ignores sin, or attempts to explain it away. Salvation through the sacrifice of Christ, the blood of Jesus, is rejected by the self-righteous and self-sufficient man. God however, speaks very clearly and definitely about sin and the necessity of atonement by blood if sin is to be blotted out, forgiven, and overcome. Various counterfeit Christianities today shut their eyes to the guilt and enormity

of sin. Spiritism, Theosophy, New Thought, Unitarianism, Christian Science, and other cults all deny the necessity of a blood redemption from sin. Disposing of sin as they do, they can easily dispense with salvation. Where there is no sin acknowledged, there is no need of a Saviour from sin. In the Cross of Christ we see a revelation of sin as well as of redemption. There we see man at his worst nailing the sinless Son of God to the accursed tree. But in that Cross of Christ the foolishness of God is seen as wiser than man, and the weakness of God is revealed as stronger than man.

Salvation by blood is not popular today. It is distasteful to many. A feeling of revulsion arises in the mind of the "modern" man when he hears a preacher refer to "the precious blood." The sneer at the "slaughterhouse theory" of the Atonement would be withdrawn if men would remember that the word is simply a figure. As Clow points out: "The Eastern mind always uses a concrete and pictorial expression. By the word 'blood' the Hebrew meant what the Western mind describes by the word 'sacrifice'. The New Testament has three pictorial words for the sacrifice of Christ. It speaks of the death of Christ . . . of the Cross of Christ . . . of the blood of Christ . . . 'The sacrifice of Jesus Christ His Son', John would have said had he been a Greek, 'sanctifies us from all sin' ". (Clow: *The Cross in Christian Experience*, pp. 181-182.)

When Torrey and Alexander were holding their meetings in the Royal Albert Hall in London, someone took away one of their hymn books, went through it carefully and cut out every reference to the blood of Christ

and then sent it back through the mail to Dr. Torrey with this message: "I have gone through your hymn book and cut out every reference to the blood. These references to the blood are foolish. Now sing your hymns with the blood left out and there will be some sense in them." I ask what kind of Bible will you have if you go through it and cut from its pages all reference to the blood? From cover to cover God's Word emphasizes the blood. God says: "When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Ex. 12:13). "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11). "We have redemption through his blood" (Eph. 1:7). "Being now justified by his blood" (Rom. 5:9). "We are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience?" (Heb. 9:14.) "And without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). "The church of God, which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14). "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood . . . to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" (Rev. 1:5-6).

In the remarkable will of the late J. Pierpont Morgan there is a wonderful statement of his faith in the Atonement. "I commit my soul into the hands of my Saviour in the full confidence that having redeemed it and washed it in His most precious blood, He will present it faultless before the throne of my heavenly Father; and I entreat my children to maintain and defend at all

hazard and at any cost of personal sacrifice the blessed doctrine of the complete Atonement for sin through the blood of Jesus Christ and through that alone."

If it means much to have our laymen hold fast to this precious truth, how much more does it mean to the Church and the world that every minister of Jesus Christ should preach redemption through the blood of Christ and hold Him up before the world as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. We need today and every day good ministers who will preach lovingly and persuasively, faithfully and fearlessly, the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

"Martin Luther preached this great doctrine of atoning blood to slumbering Europe and Europe awoke from the dead. Amid all his defences of the Divine Sovereignty John Calvin never ignored or belittled the Atonement. Cowper sang of it among the water-lilies of the Ouse; Charles Spurgeon thundered this glorious doctrine of Christ crucified into the ears of peer and peasant with a voice like the sound of many waters. John Bunyan made the Cross the starting point to the Celestial City. D. L. Moody chimed all his bells to the key note of Calvary. Gypsy Smith strings all his pearls on the red cord of the Atonement while Billy Sunday who thundered his anathemas against sin in high places, took his stand beside the Cross where Christ died to condemn all sin and to save sinners." The preacher who puts foremost the atoning blood of Jesus Christ may expect to see men and women coming home to God as doves fly to their windows. No man can expect evan-

gelistic success who does not preach redemption through the blood.

When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Marvellous benefits to mankind flow from the finished work of Christ and His Cross. Sinners are reconciled to God. The ungodly, the sinning, the outcast, the unjust—those at enmity with God and far away from their Father's home—are reconciled by the atoning death of Christ. Whatever the sin, whoever the sinners, all have been redeemed, for God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Christ's death on the Cross broke the power of Satan's dominion. So far as the believer in Christ is concerned the sway of Satan over him has ceased. In His death and resurrection Christ triumphed over the devil. In our Saviour we have the pledge of victory and the assurance that the kingdoms of this world shall become His Kingdom. The death of the Son of God was naturally attended by supernatural occurrences. It is not strange that the effect of the Atonement should be felt throughout the universe. The whole creation travaileth in pain, waiting for the complete redemption that draweth nigh. Through the blood of His Cross Christ reconciled all things unto Himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. His death is the earnest and guarantee of a universe holy unto God.

The sacrifice of Christ on the Cross secured salvation for all. In Him in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily was atonement made for all mankind, and it becomes effective in their lives if they will but come unto Him. God is not willing that any should perish, and the invitation of the Gospel is, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). "The Atonement is sufficient for all; it is efficient for those who believe in Christ. The Atonement itself so far as it lays the basis for the redemptive dealing of God with all men, is unlimited. The application of the Atonement is limited to those who actually believe in Christ. He is the Saviour of all men potentially. (I Tim. 1:15); of believers alone effectually. (I Tim. 4:10). The Atonement is limited only by man's unbelief." (Evans: *Great Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 79.)

The Atonement supplies sufficient salvation for all the world. I see in that Cross of Christ enough of salvation for all the world of every generation. The needs of every life and of all life may be met there and still the streams of grace will be undiminished. A fountain has been opened that is simply inexhaustible. Through the sacrifice of Christ great reservoirs of redeeming grace are made available to hearts of faith. One is amazed as he thinks of the abundant energies of Almighty God. A daring French painting emphasizes this truth. The whole earth appears in the form of a globe; the two hemispheres are clearly seen. In the background between them and above them is the Cross and hanging upon the Cross is the Son of God, the Saviour of the World. The life blood of Jesus Christ is sprinkling every race and nation. It is being poured out for the

whole world. Do you see in this wondrous Cross of Christ God's amazing sufficiency for all the world, and will you devote the remaining days of your life and the resources that God has put at your disposal, to bringing Christ to all the world and all the world to Christ?

O Thou who died on Calvary,
To save my soul and make me free,
I'll consecrate my life to Thee,
My Saviour and my God!

CHAPTER IV

THE GLORIOUS RESURRECTION

IT MAY well be said of the resurrection of Jesus Christ that it is the cornerstone of Christianity. The empty tomb spells hope and assurance to sinning and suffering humanity. "He is risen, yea, he is risen," means everything to the world. What a wealth of contrast is suggested in the words: "He is not here, he is risen." Suppose the utterance of the angel who thus spoke to the women that early Easter morning had been reversed and it had been necessary for the angel to say, 'He is not risen; he is here.' Have you ever thought just what a difference that would have made to every one of us? A Mohammedan speaking to a Christian missionary once said: "You must admit that we have one thing that you do not have—a coffin." The missionary, quick as a flash, replied: "Yes, that is true; but at the same time we have something that you do not have—an empty tomb!"

Oh, the anguish of Mary, the depth of despair;
When she came to the tomb and the Lord was not there!
As she desolate stood, with her balm and her myrrh
And His winding sheet only was waiting for her.
Oh, the blackness of death, oh, life's utter despair;
Had she come to the tomb and the Lord had been there!
Lying wrapped in the sheet with the balm and the myrrh
And no risen Redeemer had waited for her.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a fact. We live in an age that emphasizes facts. It is the boast of science that it deals with facts. This is true, but it is only a partial truth. I would remind science that it also deals with theories, assumptions, and hypotheses. Only recently I have heard several scientists in the fields of geology, chemistry, and astronomy declare in their addresses, "We don't know. This is only our theory. We are just guessing at it." We should be honest enough to face all the facts. The scientist who closes his mind to the proven and established facts in any other sphere of knowledge or life than his own is no true scientist. He betrays science as well as himself. A man is not truly scientific who closes his mind to historic facts, to religious and spiritual facts, to great Christian facts that have been established as true.

More than fifty years ago a memorable dinner was held in London. The leaders of contemporary English thought were present. There were no set addresses. There was no topic assigned. Dean Stanley was asked to preside, and he proposed for discussion this question: "Who will dominate the future?" Professor Huxley was the first speaker. He gave as his opinion that "the future will be dominated by the nation which sticks most closely to the facts." He left his audience profoundly affected by the dominance of physical science and the material data furnished by it. After a moment of silence the Dean called upon Edward Miall, Member of Parliament and President of the Royal Commission on Education. "I have been listening," said Mr. Miall, "to the last speaker with profound interest and agree with him that the future will be

dominated by the nation which sticks most closely to the facts; but I want to add one word,—all the facts! The greatest fact in history is God!”

In Paul's day there were those who doubted or denied the Resurrection, from two opposite points of view. There were such in his day; there are such in our day. There are those who say there is no future life at all. The death of the body ends all. The Sadducees of an earlier day, the materialists of their day, as well as the materialists of our day, have believed that mental and spiritual life are only manifestations of physical life and dependent upon it. They hold therefore that with the death of the body the whole life of the individual terminates. “Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.” But many people are awakening to the fact that materialism has cheated them. There are others who oppose materialism, who hold that the resurrection of the body, if not impossible, is at all events undesirable.

There were those too, who accepted the idea that spiritually we die and rise in Christ, and that this is all that is meant by the Resurrection. They declared that the Resurrection was past already and that all believing men were already risen in Christ. To be free from all connection with matter was an essential element in their idea of salvation, and to promise them the resurrection of the body was to offer them a very doubtful blessing indeed.

One would think that in our day, when the body, in its care, its health, its development, is so loved and looked after, men would find it easy to believe in the resurrection of the body. Yet the resurrection of Christ

is denied from both the materialistic and idealistic points of view. It is asserted that by the Resurrection we mean that the spirit of Christ survives death and now lives in a believing heart; and as to Christ's body, that it lay in His grave and the elements of His body have passed into the bosom of nature just as ours will before long.

Those who hold such views believe one of two things. Either that the body of Christ remained in the tomb, His spirit surviving death and living a disembodied but conscious and powerful life; or they mean that the Person Jesus is individually extinct, and that, although virtue still flows from His life as from that of every good man, He is Himself unconscious of this and everything else, and can exert no new or fresh influence such as emanates from a person who is alive.

Suffice it to say that none of these views is the teaching of the New Testament, that they are not borne out by the facts; while all the evidence and testimony of eyewitnesses are entirely to the contrary. The Apostle Paul summarizes the importance of the Resurrection in strong language. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Ye are yet in your sins. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Cor. 15:14-18.) The great Apostle sums up his argument in these words: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (v.19). Then he bursts forth with the truth of the whole matter: "But now is Christ risen from the dead" (v. 20).

The evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is convincing and incontrovertible. Dr. Martin J. Scott

has stated it admirably: "The record is the most scientific document of history. Christ foretold His Resurrection; the Jews knew He foretold it; the opponents of Christ were as skeptical as any today. The death of Christ was certified to the Roman Governor. The Resurrection was proclaimed in the very city where it occurred and to the very people who were instrumental in Christ's death. The first proclamation converted to belief in Christ three thousand of those who had rejected and crucified Him. No case in law, no fact in history, is so well established as the Resurrection." What are some of the proofs for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?

The first proof is the life and character of Jesus Christ. A perfect life characterized by divine claims ends in a cruel and shameful death. His was an appropriate and fitting close. Remember, we face the fact that the Resurrection of which the Gospels speak is the Resurrection of no ordinary man, but of Jesus, one whose life and character had been unique and who had consistently and constantly declared He would rise from the dead the third day.

The second proof is the fact of the empty grave and the disappearance of the body. Infidelity and unbelief in their various forms and phases have tried to prove that our Lord was never in the tomb, or else that He was stolen out of it. But they have never succeeded in their efforts.

The swoon theory is absurd as every physician and scientist, as well as every informed layman knows. Did not the blood and water pour from his pierced side, proof that he was absolutely dead?

The vision theory of the rising still involves a miracle; why substitute one miracle for another? As Professor Orr points out, "The survival of the soul is not resurrection . . . whoever heard of a spirit being buried?"

A legend—another theory—could not so quickly and powerfully influence the thought and action of mankind as the Resurrection actually did. A legend could not produce a Pentecost and a bold, witnessing Church.

There was absolutely no motive for the disciples to tell a falsehood and if they had, the lie would soon have been discovered.

If His enemies had stolen the body, they would at once have produced it when the Resurrection truth began powerfully to convince men and to shape the Church.

To disprove the assertion that His disciples stole the body, one has but to point to the Roman guard who, after rolling the great stone in place, sealed it and watched it on pain of death. Yet on the third morning, the body disappeared. There are only the two alternatives. His body must have been taken out of the grave by human hands, or else by superhuman power. All the evidence points to the latter.

How, too, can you account for the failure of the Jews to disprove the Resurrection? What could have been any easier or more conclusive than for the Jews to produce the dead body and so silence the preaching of the Resurrection forever? As Principal Fairbairn truly points out, "The silence of the Jews is as significant as the speech of the Christians." The one outstanding

fact that baffles all unbelief and infidelity of every generation, is the empty tomb.

Another great proof of the Resurrection is the record of the appearance, of the risen Christ. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is an established fact, resting on the testimony of the most credible witnesses. What would you think if I should say to you, 'I do not believe that George Washington ever lived, I do not believe that he was the Commander-in-chief of the Revolutionary armies, that he was President of the United States; that he died and was buried at Mount Vernon, Virginia; and the reason why I do not believe these things is because I never saw George Washington; I never talked with him; and furthermore I never saw anyone who did see him or talk with him or experience anything in common with him?' The evidence for the Resurrection of Christ from the dead is as strong as the evidence for the life and career and death of George Washington. The man who cannot accept on the evidence presented the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, cannot accept accredited history.

Let us bring into the witness box the competent witnesses who can testify that they saw Him, heard Him, ate with Him, and walked with Him, after He had been pronounced dead and His body had been sealed in a tomb. In other words, listen to the testimony of those who saw Him after He had risen from the dead.

On the day of His Resurrection Mary Magdalene saw Him; the women returning from the tomb saw Him; that afternoon Peter saw Him; the disciples at Emmaus saw Him; all the apostles save Thomas that

evening saw Him; eight days later all the apostles including Thomas saw Him; later in Galilee the seven disciples saw Him and had breakfast with Him; at Jerusalem and Bethany James and the eleven saw Him; on a mountain the apostles and five hundred brethren saw Him, "of whom," says Paul, "the greater part remain unto this present"; and last but not least He appeared unto Paul on the Damascus Road. What dynamic change and world-wide influence flowed from that meeting with the risen Christ! There is no better attested fact in all history than the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Remember that the disciples were not expecting a Resurrection. They thought Jesus was dead forever. They never dreamed that they would see Him three days later. They were downcast and in despair, without hope or prospect of seeing Him again.

When they saw Him they knew that He was the one whom they had known, their loved Friend and Master, and they testified clearly and spontaneously to the fact that they had seen the One whom they had known before He laid down His life on the Cross. They were fully assured that the body they saw was no ghost or disembodied spirit. It was a body that could be touched, lips that could speak, a mouth that could partake of food. Jesus Himself came and stood in the midst and spoke to them. "And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord." (John 20:20.) Thomas was not there and he missed the blessing. Men who will not confront the evidence of Christ's Resurrection will never believe. They commit spiritual sui-

cide. But Thomas, still unbelieving, decided to face the evidence. And thus it was that Jesus had the opportunity to say to him: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John 20:27-29.)

Remember, "it is well known that records of eye-witnesses often vary in details while there is no question as to the events themselves." The various books regarding the story of the Indian Mutiny or the surrender of Napoleon at Sedan and a score of other historical works are illustrations of this truth. Sir William Ramsay has shown the entire compatibility of certainty as to the main fact, with uncertainty as to precise details. Thomas Arnold of Rugby, keen judge of historical evidence, said that the Resurrection was the best attested fact in human history. The Archbishop of Armagh expresses the judgment of mankind when he declares that the "Resurrection is the rock from which all the hammers of criticism have never chipped a single fragment."

In Christ's time the men who had to be convinced were the scribes and Pharisees. Do not imagine that things could pass in those days which never would be allowed to pass now. Do not forget that the Gospel facts occurred in the age of Caesar Augustus, Tacitus, and Pliny, an age of ripe scholarship and keen criticism. The Gospel facts do not belong to a period in the hazy past wherein fact and fancy blend. They transpired be-

fore a wide-awake, intelligent, cultured citizenship. Nothing could convince them unless supported by the strongest evidence.

The Resurrection was a public matter and stirred a whole people who were as keen and shrewd as any who ever lived, who had every reason for opposing the Resurrection, for to accept it meant their own undoing and condemnation. Yet Peter on Pentecost preaching the Resurrection saw three thousand people believe it and begin to suffer and die for their belief. A little later five thousand more put their trust in the Risen Christ. This is as big a miracle as the Resurrection itself. Without it, such a change in so many minds is incomprehensible.

Let us bear in mind however, that the most powerful historical evidence for the Resurrection is the fact that, "It was believed, preached, propagated and produced its fruit and effect in the new phenomenon of the Christian Church, long before any of our Gospels was written. . . . Faith in the Resurrection was not only prevalent but immensely powerful before any of our New Testament books were written." (James Denney: *Jesus and the Gospel*, p. 111.)

Think of the transformation in the disciples after the Resurrection! Where they had been weak, they became strong; where they had denied, they became fearless witnesses; where they were so cowardly that all ran away when Jesus was sentenced to death, they now courted imprisonment, stripes, and death. What caused that transformation? The Resurrection. Unless these men and others like them were sure of their facts,

would they have acted in this manner? Men do not adhere even to a good cause unless they have strong incentives. Why should men support this condemned cause? "The Jewish authorities condemned it. The Roman Government condemned it. The passions of men condemned it. Why should a few illiterate and ignorant men defend it, be zealous for it, suffer for it, even die for it? Because it was true. The Resurrection was a fact." (Scott: *The Resurrection of Christ*, p. 115.)

Is it any wonder that Christians were born by the millions wherever the Good News of the Resurrection was preached and all that flows from it? Tacitus in Book 15, chapter 44, says that the religion of Christ had spread to such an extent that in Rome itself it numbered a vast multitude.

Pliny as Roman Governor of the Province of Bithynia wrote to the Emperor Trajan that there was a numerous and well organized body of Christians in that remote province; that the Christian religion so flourished that the pagan temples were in consequence deserted. Tertullian, a pagan until middle life, writing to the Roman Emperor as early as 200 A.D. says: "We are but of yesterday, and we fill all that is yours, your cities, your islands, your military posts, your boroughs, your council chambers and your camps; your tribes, your corporations, the palace, the Senate, the forum; your temples alone do we leave to you" (*Apology*, C.37).

What caused these amazing results, this wonderful spread of the Christian faith, this conquering of the

world? The fact of the Resurrection. Every effect has a cause. The effect is supernatural; therefore, the cause must be. The cause was the Resurrection.

Because He is risen, we can get the victory over sin and death. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not only fact, but power. It makes for freedom. Alexander Kerensky was one of Russia's outstanding leaders in the Revolution. I was recently reading his new book, *The Classification of Liberty*. He does not support Communism or Fascism or dictatorship of any kind. He desires democracy for Europe. Without it he believes our liberties will disappear. But his book does not go to the root of the problem. Man's bondage is of three kinds. The late Bishop Velimorovic of what was Serbia, declared that man is in bondage to the brute forces of nature; to the power of evil and selfish men; to himself and his sin. Science helps to set men free from the brute forces of nature; science and politics help to set men free from the power of evil men individually or collectively; but only religion, nay more, only a living Christ, the one Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, can deliver men from the bondage of sin and selfishness, can break the shackles that bind men to themselves. Christ bore our sins and the world's sin. On Calvary's Cross, He died a ransom, a curse, a sin offering in our stead. If He arose not, then we are still in our sins, without God and hope in the world. But He not only died for our sins; He arose for our justification. Jesus Christ has power on earth and power in heaven to forgive sin.

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free!

Jesus Christ delivers men from the fear of death. It is a real fear. Death is nothing to explain lightly away or to fool ourselves about. It is the last great enemy. It was never in God's original plan for the human race. By His death and Resurrection, Christ drank the cup of death. He broke its power; He triumphed openly over it and once for all, "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14-15).

Death cannot keep his prey—
Jesus my Saviour!
He tore the bars away—
Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.
He arose! He arose!
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

When Jesus Christ rose from the dead it was proof that what He came to do as a Saviour had been accomplished and was approved of God. "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. . . . But now is Christ risen." (I Cor. 15:17-20.) "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:55-57.)

As William J. Loar puts it: "The living Christ is significant for the redemption of man. It is readily agreed that man stands in need of redemption; redemption from sin, redemption from suffering, redemption from the buried hopes that lie shattered in the tombs of despair and this redemption finds its culmination in the living Christ." "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

If you lay imprisoned in some great fortress and one who loved you went forth to try to rescue you and fell and died fighting, you would cherish the memory of your friend's valiant effort on your behalf. But you would still remain in chains undelivered. So would it have been with those whom Christ came to save, if He had not risen; those for whom He gave His life would have been undelivered. But Christ has conquered death and holds in His hands the keys of the grave. "Because I live ye shall live also."

This conquering of death through a risen Saviour is a real experience in the lives of millions. "What did you do to our daughter?" asked a Moslem woman whose child had died at sixteen years of age. "We did nothing," answered the missionary. "Oh yes, you did," persisted the mother. "She died smiling. Our people do not die like that." This girl had found Christ and had believed in Him a few months before.

Because He is risen we have the assurance of blessed immortality. In nature, as Wordsworth points out to us in his ode, there are intimations of immortality. Belief in immortality is incurably a part of man's life

here on earth. It is the one great fact that faces every thinking human. How can anyone rest even for one day in peace of mind while he has any misgivings about his immortality? The mortal body may become lifeless at any moment. What then? From Job down to H. G. Wells, writers have asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" This naturally becomes the most pressing question of mind and heart. If all mankind is immortal, what kind of immortality will be mine?

The Resurrection brings assurance. Because Christ arose men are now assured of a future life. They have longed to know this, and there are many indications of it. Nature and human nature, reason and life, contribute their quota of the evidence; but it is Christ's Resurrection that assures us of immortality. Would you know one of the causes for the low spiritual life of the Church and for the sag in public morality in these days? It is because men have doubted a future life and lost their grip on immortality. Faith in a risen Christ and a living Saviour will alone solve many of the problems of our individual and national life.

Because of Christ's Resurrection we have assurance that our loved ones live and that those who have fallen asleep in Christ will have part in the Resurrection at His coming. On the tomb of Thomas Huxley, the great agnostic, are these lines:

And if there be no meeting past the grave.
If all is silence, darkness, yet 'tis rest,
Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep
For God still giveth His beloved sleep;
And if an endless sleep He wills, so best.

But one of America's outstanding men, and one of the most versatile who ever lived, thought otherwise. More than once I have stood near Benjamin Franklin's grave in the old cemetery of Christ Church, Philadelphia, and looking through the iron grating of the fence, have observed the flat stone that marks his grave. Franklin composed his own epitaph in these words:

THE BODY
OF
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
PRINTER
(Like the cover of an old book
Its contents worn out
And stript of its lettering and gilding)
Lies here, food for worms.
But the work shall not be lost
For it will [as he believed] appear once more
In a new and more elegant edition
Revised and corrected
by
THE AUTHOR

The celebrated Dr. William Osler of England and of Johns Hopkins Medical School came to the end of his distinguished career, thinking of his son killed in action in the World War. Near the end he said: "The harbour almost reached, and my son awaiting me. Love can never lose its own." Even the Scotch atheistic philosopher and historian, David Hume, poignantly said: "When I think of my mother, I believe in im-

mortality." Christ's resurrection guarantees to men what they only ardently hoped for before.

In the early days of the Christian Era, when the Gospel was first preached to the Saxons of Northumbria by Paulinus, King Edwin sat in the council with his chiefs and wise men to consult whether they should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the King's mighty warriors arose and in the words of the poet, counselled him thus:

Athwart the room a sparrow darts from the open door ;
Within the happy hearth-light one red flash and no more !
So is our life, King Edwin ! Alas that it is so !
But if this pale Paulinus have somewhat more to tell ;
Some news of Whence and Whither, and where the soul
 will dwell ;
If on the outer darkness, the sun of hope may shine. . . .
He makes life worth the living :
I take his God for mine !

We have the assurance of blessed immortality after death. Is life merely a piece of tissue paper? Then as Balfour said: "It's a brief and discreditable episode on one of the minor planets." Man has always been interested in immortality. Since the World War, with millions of lives snuffed out, that interest has deepened throughout the world. Spiritism and every "uncannyism" have sought to pierce the veil and hold communion with the spirits of the departed dead. The effort to establish life beyond the grave by scientific evidence proves the ineradicableness of the intuition of immortality in every breast, and that there is nothing in

science to discredit it. Shelley substituted "the spirit of Nature" for God. He could not escape the impulse of his own spirit to worship. God had set eternity in his heart.

A physician was calling on a patient who was very ill. "Doctor," the dying man asked him, "what is on the other side?" And the doctor replied: "I do not know." "But you are a Christian man," said the patient, "and you must know something; tell me." Just then a scratching sound was heard at the door, and the doctor stepping over softly threw the door open. In sprang a beautiful collie, which showed every evidence of affection and trust in the physician. Turning to his patient the doctor said: "You see this dog? He has never been in this room before. He only knew that I, his master, was here and when he was given the opportunity and the door was opened, he sprang in immediately and greeted me with every evidence of trust and affection. So it is in regard to the life beyond the grave. I have never been there, but I know that my Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, is there and when the summons comes for me, I will enter the door of death and be immediately in the presence of my Lord and Saviour and will know Him and be welcomed of Him."

Sir James R. Ewing, an honored missionary of the Presbyterian Church in India for many years, lay dying in his home in Princeton. His last words, as he held his wife's hand, were the words of quiet confidence and unflinching trust, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job asked centuries ago, "If a man die shall he live again?" The risen Christ gives the answer. For all who are in Him the risen Christ is the answer. "Because I

live, ye shall live also." "Where I am, there ye may be also."

Several weeks after Great Britain declared war against Germany it was my privilege to be in the home of Doctor Simpson in Edinburgh, the son of Sir James Simpson, the great physician and discoverer of chloroform as an anesthetic, whose monument stands on Princes Street of that lovely city. When Sir James had lost his eldest child he erected on the grave an obelisk pointing like a spire toward the heavens. On it he carved the words: "Nevertheless I live." Above the words was a butterfly, to suggest his invincible faith that in Christ Jesus, as someone has said, "death is only a transition, an evolution from the limitations of the chrysalis to the freedom of a life with wings." When he himself, I believe, fell asleep in Christ it was in the confidence that he would awake in His likeness. However, if Christ be not risen from the dead, the words he carved on the obelisk mean nothing, while the butterfly with its symbolic meaning suggests only a vain hope. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

Archibald Rutledge, Professor of English in Mercersburg Academy, is the author of many works of prose and poetry. Henry Van Dyke referred to him as "the most authentic voice" in the interpretation of nature today. One February I was preaching in the beautiful cathedral chapel at my old school, and while there I had a delightful visit with Dr. Rutledge. I secured a copy of his beautiful book, *Peace in the Heart*, which he graciously autographed. In the opening chapter, entitled The Sunrise, he has this exquisite passage:

"One dearer to me than all else in life had, for days, lain helpless, speechless. Consciousness was gone. We knew that the mortal mists were fast gathering, that the irremediable river must soon be crossed. . . . Suddenly, the one we loved so dearly sat up in bed, a strange light on her face of a happiness past all our mortal joy. She stretched abroad her arms, crying in the radiant abandon of spiritual certainty, 'The Dawn! The beautiful Dawn!' Those were her dying words, glad, triumphant. And for me they hold the eternal promise of the sunrise. They glow with immortality. Believing in a God of infinite love and of infinite power, I find it natural to believe that death is not a disastrous sundown but rather a spiritual sunrise, ushering in the un conjectured splendors of immortality."

Because Christ is risen, we know there is also an immortality of the body. Immortality is one thing; resurrection is another. When Paul stood up on Mars Hill in the midst of the learned assembly of the Areopagites, had he spoken to them about the immortality of the soul, they would not have left, they would have respected him, for this was one of the supreme truths which their own wise men had taught. "When," as Charles H. Spurgeon points out, "he went on to assert that the flesh and blood which was laid in the tomb should yet rise again, that bones which had become the dwelling place of worms, that flesh which had corrupted and decayed should actually start afresh and to life, that the body as well as the soul should live, some mocked and others said 'We will hear thee again of this matter.' " The fact is, reason as well as revelation, teaches the immortality of the spirit; it is revelation

alone which teaches the immortality of the body. Mr. Dwight L. Moody, the hundredth anniversary of whose birth we are celebrating this year, once said: "I like to think of the time when the dead shall rise from their graves. We read at these last rites for the dead, what we call the 'burial service.' It is an unfortunate expression. Paul never talked of 'burial'; he said the body was 'sown',—'sown in corruption', 'sown in weakness', 'sown a natural body'. If I bury a bushel of wheat, I never expect to see it again, but if I sow it I expect results. Thank God our friends are not buried, they are only 'sown'!"

Mary Magdalene did not find the dead body of Christ, and it was well she did not, for if death could have held Him, it would not let us go. On a shelf in the Roman Catacombs where the bodies of Christians had been laid away, this inscription appears: "There is light in this darkness, there is music in these tombs." It is said that in Peru a custom is followed that is designed to honor Admiral Grau, Peru's noblest naval hero, killed in battle off the Coast of Chile. Always at roll call Admiral Grau's name is the first to be called. An orderly steps forward and pointing upward answers, "Absent, but accounted for; he is with the heroes." As Christians we have a greater comfort and assurance than this.

When we think of our loved ones who have died believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, we may hear Him speaking to us through His word: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3.)

There are those who believe in what they call the spiritual resurrection of Christ, but not in a bodily resurrection. The Scriptures teach that Christ came forth from the grave in the same body which was crucified on Calvary's Cross; yet in one sense those who deny that He came forth in the same body are right, for it was not the same body. It was a changed body, a glorified body in which He came forth. In other words, it was the very same body but that same body transformed, changed, glorified, having qualities that it did not possess before the Resurrection.

Many people find it impossible to believe in the resurrection of the body. I am reminded of a story in the life of Michael Faraday, the great scientist, which throws light for me on this question. Several workmen were handling a beautiful silver vase in the scientist's laboratory one day. One of them blundered and the vase fell into a vat of acid. Before the eyes of the workmen, the vase disintegrated in the acid. Much distressed, the men told Mr. Faraday about it. He went into his private laboratory near-by, took several vials, the contents of which he alone knew, and poured them into the vat of acid. In a little while, the silver began to appear and collected at the bottom. The workmen then drew off the acid. The lump of silver was taken by them and under the direction of their master, was fashioned into an even more beautiful vase than the former one. One day the bodies of believers will rise,

strong, beautiful, and glorious and be united to their redeemed spirits. Then the complete redemption of the whole man, body and spirit, will have been accomplished.

Dr. Andrew Bonar once tried to describe the Resurrection glory. He pictured one angel saying to another as they saw a radiant form arise: "Look at her! Do you remember the poor, old woman in the lowly cottage, her face wrinkled with age and haggard with suffering? Look at her now, not an angel has a face so bright and beautiful. So it will be with all who wear the transfigured glory of Christ." Every man needs to ask himself, 'Do I know in my own personal experience this Christ who brought life and immortality to light through the Gospels? Is it well with my soul now, so that it may be well with both soul and body yonder?'

One day when John Quincy Adams was eighty years of age, a friend met him on the streets of Boston. "How is John Quincy Adams this morning?" the friend inquired brightly. The old man's eyes began to twinkle and then he said slowly: "John Quincy Adams himself is very well, thank you, but the house he lives in is sadly dilapidated. It is tottering on its foundations, the walls are badly shattered and the roof is fallen in. The building trembles with every wind and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out before very long; but he himself is very well, thank you, very well!"

Because Christ is risen we have His abiding presence and the power of His Resurrection for daily living. We believe the fact of the Resurrection; are we living in

the power of that Resurrection? We believe that we have been crucified with Christ; are we walking in newness of life in Christ?

Is it a piece of presumption to say, "I know whom I have believed," or "I know that my redeemer liveth?" The scientist says "I know," and sometimes he says it with very little justification. The botanist says "I know." The gardener says "I know." The agriculturist says "I know." The engineer says "I know." But can a Christian say "I know"? Most assuredly he can. You may not know the day or the hour or even the place where you first met with Christ, but you do know the great fact that you have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life, and that is the one thing that matters.

Christ is risen that we might live unto Him who died for us and rose again. The omnipotent risen Christ is the triumphant Redeemer, and by faith in Him we are to carry His victory out into our lives, putting to death malice, impurity, temper, lying, hate, and all selfishness and sin. Dr. John Henry Jowett has this searching and strengthening word. "'The Lord is risen.' 'Your labor is not in vain in the Lord.' Settle down, therefore, tenaciously, to the labor of sweetening and beautifying your own life. Set to work as you would set to work at an unkempt garden. Weed your life; get hold of some weed of ill prejudice and hang on to it steadfastly and immovably until, by the power of the living Christ, you have it out to the last fiber of the last rootlet, and it is all cast away to the devouring flames. Get hold of some ungainly growth in your life, some mighty unchristian habit, and by the power of the living Christ have it out. March up to some pool

of bitterness which is souring your life like a rancid and unclean pool in the garden of the soul, and by the grace of the risen Lord never rest until that pool is as pure as the 'river of the water of life, clear as crystal'. But especially, go up to that thing in your life, that ugly thing which has mastered you so often that you have begun to think it can never be dislodged. 'The Lord is risen . . .' That ugly thing is not the master; have it out, and by the power of the living Lord fling it to the flames of Gehenna where the fire is never quenched. Inspect every corner of the ruined or disordered garden in your soul, and with a tenacity fiercer even than that of death itself, resolve that by the power of the risen Lord the garden shall become fair and sweet and beautiful as the paradise of God."

There will be a resurrection. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." Like the waving tassels of the first golden corn indicating the crop that is to follow, like the first swallows that tell us that winter is past and that spring is at hand, like the first violets and daffodils that assure us of all the glory of springtime blossom and fruit that are to come, so Christ's Resurrection is the guarantee and assurance, the first fruits, of the resurrection of all who fall asleep in Him.

CHAPTER V

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MAN'S REGENERATION

BELIEF in the Holy Spirit is one of the great fundamental beliefs of our Christian faith. Simply and beautifully it is expressed by the Apostle Paul in what is known as the Apostolic Benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all."

In the Apostles' Creed, which is held throughout the Christian Church, there are three great affirmations: "I believe in God the Father Almighty"; "I believe . . . in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord"; "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

In the brief statement of the Reformed Faith there is this fine statement as to the Holy Spirit: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who moves everywhere upon the hearts of men, to restrain them from evil and to incite them unto good, and whom the Father is ever willing to give unto all who ask Him. We believe that He has spoken by holy men of God in making known His truth to men for their salvation; that, through our exalted Saviour, He was sent forth in power to convict the world of sin, to enlighten men's minds in the knowledge of Christ, and to persuade and enable them to obey the call of the

Gospel; and that He abides with the church, dwelling in every believer as the Spirit of truth, of holiness and of comfort."

Belief in the Holy Spirit is necessary to belief in the Trinity. The *Westminster Shorter Catechism* has the clearest and briefest statement: "There are Three Persons in the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory."

There are in the sanctuaries of the old churches of the East on Mount Athos, Dean Stanley tells us, sacred pictures intended to represent the doctrine of the Trinity, in which, as the spectator stands at one side, he sees only the figure of our Saviour on the Cross; as he stands on the other side he sees only the Heavenly Dove; as he stands in front he sees only the Ancient of Days, the Eternal Father. So Faber sings of the Holy Spirit:

An undivided nature shared
With Father and with Son;
A Person by Thyself ; with them
Thy simple essence One.

Thou art an unborn breath outbreathed
On angels and on men,
Subduing all things to Thyself,
We know not how or when.

The Holy Spirit is the third Person in the Trinity. He is also called the "Spirit of God," the "Spirit," the "spirit of the Lord," the "Spirit of Promise," and the "Spirit of Truth."

As Christ is God by an eternal sonship, so the Spirit is God by procession from the Father and the Son. As the vital breath of a man has a continual emanation from him, and yet is never separated utterly from his person, so does the Spirit of the Father and the Son proceed from them by continual divine emanation, still abiding one with them.

The Holy Spirit, while equal to God, is subordinate to God, just as man and wife are equal, but woman is subordinate to the man only in the sense that in the divine plan and order man has been given the headship. The Holy Spirit speaks whatsoever things He shall hear; He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. He is called the Holy Spirit because He is the author of holiness throughout the universe. "The Holy Spirit," says Dr. Archibald Hodge, "is God, the Operator, the end and glory of whose work in the moral world is holiness, as in the physical world beauty" (*Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 189).

He is called the Spirit of God because this phrase expresses His divinity, His intimate personal relation to the Father, and because He is the *divine* Spirit, which, proceeding from God, operates or works upon man.

It is clearly stated and shown that the Holy Spirit is a Person. Some Christian people, because they are thoughtless or ignorant, speak of the Holy Spirit as "it." The Holy Spirit is not simply the power of God, a divine influence or energy. He is a *Person*, as we are taught in such passages as these: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4:30); "The Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered"

(Rom. 8:26); "The Spirit said unto Peter, Behold, three men seek thee" (Acts 10:19); "The Holy Ghost said: Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

The Holy Spirit is not only a Person, but He is God. The Deity of the Holy Spirit follows when His personality is established. The Scriptures declare that the Holy Spirit is omnipotent (Luke 1:35; Rom. 8:11); that He is omnipresent (Psa. 139; 7, 10); that He is omniscient (I Cor. 2:10-11); and that He is eternal (Heb. 9:14).

Creation, divine prophecies, and other distinctively divine works are ascribed to the Holy Spirit (John 6:63; 14:26; 16:13; I Peter 1:22). The Name of the Holy Spirit is often coupled with that of God, and is called God. God, in His Word distinctively proclaims that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person. It is clear therefore that the Holy Spirit is not a creature, but a Person, equal with God. The unpardonable sin is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. We are taught to honor the Spirit as we honor the Father and the Son, for we are baptized in His Name, and the Apostolic Benediction invokes the communion of the Holy Spirit as well as the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The revelation concerning the Holy Spirit in the Bible is progressive. Dr. Scofield points out that "in the Old Testament, He comes upon whom He will, apparently without reference to conditions in them." In the Old Testament the Spirit is represented as operative in nature, the author and source of life in its ascending stages. The Spirit brooded over the face of the deep, bringing order out of confusion, and "called

into being the ascending orders of life," to quote Prof. J. M. Shaw of Queen's College, Ontario. He is represented also in the Old Testament as active in human life and history, the author and source of all unusual, extraordinary or superordinary gifts of understanding and wisdom and skill and character. Especially was He active in the minds and hearts of the Old Testament prophets, enabling them to discern and interpret the divine working and to live their lives in its power. During His earthly life, Jesus taught His disciples that they might receive the Spirit through prayer to the Father. At the close of His ministry, He promised that He would Himself pray the Father, and that in answer to His prayer the Comforter would come to abide. "It is expedient for you"—advantageous, better, not for your loss, but for your gain—"that I go away." "I will not leave you desolate [or orphans]; I will come to you." Not so do ordinary men speak in view of their death and approaching departure.

Contrast the story of Jesus' last hours with His disciples with the story of Socrates' last hours with his disciples, as recorded by Plato in the *Phaedo*. He is going away from them, Socrates says, and they will be left "orphans"—the very same word our Lord employs. Socrates believes that it is well for himself that he goes; he will be set free from misunderstanding and persecution. But well for them? No, he does not say that.

Look at what the Apostle Paul says: "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better"—far better for myself—"nevertheless "to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." But not so

Jesus. His going away, His withdrawing from them as a visible presence, would be not for His disciples' loss, but rather for their gain. People often say, 'I wish Jesus were living on earth today.' Well, suppose He were. In all reverence I say, if you wanted to have Him in your home today, the rest of us could not have Him! He must needs go away so that all of us might have Him.

As Professor Shaw puts it: "Jesus went on to explain: 'If I go not away the Spirit, the Comforter, the Empowerer, or to use Wyclif's translation, 'the "Helper"' will not come. But if I go, I will send Him unto you,' and when He is come, He said, they would realize a closer, more intimate and therefore more empowering or enabling, fellowship with Himself than they had experienced when He was bodily present with them on earth. The coming of the Holy Spirit was not to be thought of merely as a compensation or substitute for an absent Christ, a kind of second-best. No, it was actually to be better for them, they would be able to do greater things than when He was bodily present with them, for the Spirit's presence was to be not a power acting on behalf of an absent Christ, but rather a higher, more helpful mode of Christ's own presence, a more spiritual inner and abiding presence of Christ, a presence not merely with them but *in* them, an inner Divine empowering Presence lifting them to a new plane of life and service." (*The British Weekly*.)

On the Day of Pentecost the Spirit came upon the whole body of believers. A wonderful change and transformation took place in them. Weakness gave place to strength; cowardice to courage, sadness to joy. Winter

gave place to spring and shadow to sunshine. "It is life on a new level, life 'in the Spirit', life in fellowship or communion with a risen, living Christ through the Holy Spirit."

The functions and activities of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost are an instructive and thrilling story. When Peter opened the door of the Kingdom to the Gentiles the Holy Spirit without delay, on no other condition than faith, was given to those who believed. This is the permanent fact for the entire Church age. Every believer is born of the Spirit, indwelt by the Spirit, whose presence makes the believer's body a temple, and baptized by the Spirit, thus sealing him for God. The Spirit forms the Church by baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, He imparts gifts for service to every member of that body, guides the members in that service, and is Himself the power of that service. The Holy Spirit abides in the company of believers who constitute a particular church, making of them corporately a temple.

Unbelievers may commit certain sins against the Holy Spirit. They may blaspheme Him, resist Him, insult Him. The sin against the Holy Ghost consists in finally rejecting the Gospel; it is the unpardonable sin, indicating a final and an unalterable determination to refuse God's offered mercy. If any who read these pages have been resisting God's offers of mercy, as they may have come in past years to you through a mother's prayers, a friend's entreaty or a preacher's invitation, I beseech you, delay no longer, harden not your heart, but right now, repent and believe the Gospel of your salvation.

Believers sin against the Holy Spirit when they grieve Him by allowing evil in heart or life, and when they quench Him by disobedience.

The Holy Spirit has certain approaches or relationships to the believer. He convicts of sin; He presents Christ as the object of faith; He imparts faith; He regenerates.

The Holy Spirit abides in the heart of the believer to give victory over the flesh, to create Christian character, to help our infirmities, to inspire prayer, to give conscious access to God, to make real to the believer his sonship, to apply the Scriptures in cleansing and sanctification, to comfort, to intercede, and to reveal Christ.

When Stanley went to Africa in search of Livingstone he was not a Christian, but after he had met and lived with Livingstone, he gave this testimony: "Here is a man who is manifestly sustained as well as guided from Heaven. The Holy Spirit dwells in him. God speaks through him. The heroism, the nobility, the pure and stainless enthusiasm at the root of his life come, beyond question, from Christ. There must, therefore, be a Christ, and it is worth while to have such a Helper and Redeemer as this Christ undoubtedly is." "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). When the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost and filled the hearts of the believers, and transformed their lives, as Dr. Shaw puts it, "it is now for the first time realized that that Power of God, that Divine Creative Energy, the very nature of which is to be and to do *beyond* and *above* what we can do,—super-natural, super-human, super-

historic that that power of God's Spirit, the greatness of which was most fully manifested in the resurrection of Christ had become, through the risen exalted Christ, a power within man—the 'above' and 'beyond' becoming the 'within'; the 'supra' becoming the 'intra'; lifting [the believer] to a new level of life and power." In the Holy Spirit God is not afar off, but the "immanent God," God dwelling in us, an ever present God and Helper. So Browning has put the great truth in immortal words:

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit
With Spirit can meet;
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer
Than hands or feet.

Now, the New Testament distinguishes between having the Spirit, which is true of all believers, and being filled with the Spirit, which is the believer's privilege and duty. There is one baptism, but many fillings. As Dr. Charles R. Erdman of Princeton Seminary points out, the normal, natural state for every Christian is to be filled with the Holy Ghost:

"Men talk about being filled with the Holy Ghost as though it were a very peculiar and extraordinary experience to which few men attain, while the natural thing is this: to rise in the morning, to offer yourself to your Lord for the service of that day, and then believe that by His Spirit He will empower you for all the duties of that day—and that is all there is to it. The duty of the day may be to preach to ten thousand people or to dress and care for the little child. The

natural thing is to yield yourself to Christ, and therefore the Spirit of Christ dwelling in you will give you all the power you need for your special and specific work. I really believe that the men truly filled with the Spirit are the men least conscious of the fact; when everything is normal physically you are not conscious of the physical organs. When everything is normal spiritually, you walk together with your Lord, you get into sweet fellowship with Him, He is guarding you all the time by His Spirit while you are probably not conscious of the Spirit."

What you and I need is not to have more of the Holy Spirit, but to let the Holy Spirit have more of us. If He does not fill us, it is because there is little or no room in us for Him; we are filled with other things.

"God is for us—that is good; God is with us—that is better; God is *in* us—that is best."

Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.

Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame;
The kindling of the heaven-descended Dove,
My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame.

REGENERATION

Sin has produced two great results in human life: It has made man guilty in the sight of God; it has like-

wise debased our nature and caused our spiritual death. God's redemption must not only provide for the removal of our guilt, but must also be able to impart new life and power to our nature. Saving faith is necessary if we are to experience through appropriation the salvation that is offered to us through Jesus Christ.

We hear much of revolutions throughout the world. Some of them aim to change the character of human life and destiny. But there is a supreme revolution that shakes the souls of men to their foundations, that generates new life, that issues in new forms and orders. That revolution is the spiritual birth of a human being.

Nicodemus, the Jewish ecclesiastic and gentleman of culture, came to Jesus by night to talk over things of the Kingdom. I do not believe he came by night because he felt what man might say about him, but that he wanted a quiet time with Jesus. As a friend of mine put it: "I have more respect for a man who will come to Christ in the dark than for one who dodges Christ all his days." Marcus Dods suggests that Nicodemus came with his own ideas of setting up the Kingdom of God and to point out that Jesus was making a mistake as to His method. Whatever may have been his motive in coming, Jesus immediately went to the root of the matter and told this man of high moral character, rich in culture, and a trusted leader in the religious affairs of his nation that what he needed was to be born again. Nicodemus knew Jesus was a teacher come from God, while Jesus knew Nicodemus needed more than teaching; he needed a revolution in his own soul.

John Oxenham once said: "It is not through believ-

ing in miracles that one enters the Kingdom, but in experiencing the miracle." Men enter the Kingdom not by economic prosperity, but by spiritual birth; not by political strategies, but by spiritual solutions; not by outward regulation of conduct, but by inward renewal of life. The Scriptures refer to regeneration under different terms—"creating anew" (Eph. 4:24); "begetting" (James 1:18); "quickenings" (John 5:21; Eph. 2:5); "calling out of darkness into marvellous light" (I Pet. 2:9); those who have experienced regeneration are said to be "alive from the dead" (Rom. 6:13); "to be new creatures" (2 Cor. 5:17); "to be born again" (John 3:3, 7); "to be God's workmanship" (Eph. 2:10).

Before we proceed to discuss what the new birth is, let us see what it is not. It is not the reformation of human nature. Many seek to improve what they already possess; to throw off bad habits, to practice new and better ones; to turn over new leaves; to give up or slough off harmful practices. But regeneration is not the rehabilitation of the old life or the mere improvement of that which has been given to us through natural generation.

The new birth is not the evolving of a better person by education. Much may be accomplished through the acquisition of knowledge, the discipline of the mind, but education in itself does not make men good or lead them to love and obey God.

The new birth is not the practice of morality. The old phrase "total depravity" does not mean that there is nothing good about a man, or that he cannot maintain ordinary good morals. Various reasons and influ-

ences lead people to practice the common decencies of life.

The new birth is not the observance of religious duties. They have their important place in human life, and without the faithful use of the means of grace the Christian himself will not long experience the realities of grace. One may be punctilious, however, in the performance of his religious duties without having known the transforming power of spiritual renewal within.

Regeneration, or the new birth, is not intellectual assent to orthodoxy. There are those who regard faith as moral assent, but saving faith includes trust as well as assent. The Gospel must be preached and the offer of salvation must be made before men can believe. But in order to be saved, men must savingly believe, or trust, in the Lord Jesus Christ. Mere assent to pure orthodoxy is not enough.

Regeneration and the new birth do not occur because of baptism by water. In other words, regeneration is not a matter of external symbols. The Roman Catholic Church believes that regeneration is accomplished only through the instrumentality of baptism, which is effectual in every instance of its application to an infant. In the case of adults, its virtue may be either resisted and nullified, or received and improved. Archbishop Whately and others in the Church of England have held that baptismal regeneration means nothing more than that in the Sacrament of Baptism one baptized becomes externally related to the Church. The Bible does not teach baptismal regeneration. All those who maintain that baptism is necessary to regeneration are in opposition to the Word of God.

We do not believe as does the Roman Catholic Church that infants dying without being baptized are lost. The salvation of infants is not endangered by neglect of baptism. The Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church clearly declares that, "Elect infants, dying in infancy [and all dying in infancy are elect] are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth" (ch. 10, sec. 3). Neither is regeneration conferred by a bishop or a Church or by partaking of the Lord's Supper.

What is the new birth? The New Birth is the imparting to the one who is born again of a new nature. And this new nature is God's own nature. By being born again, we become actual partakers of God's nature. "Whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Pet. 1:4 A.R.V.). In the new birth, God imparts to the man born again His own holy nature so that, when that nature is in the ascendancy, the person feels as God feels, loves the things that God loves, hates the things that God hates, and wills as God wills. He is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. (Col. 3:10.)

Paul recognized the radical change that came to man through regeneration: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Dr. Francis L. Patton says: "It is an instantaneous, radical and permanent change in the moral nature, in virtue of

which the subject is said to be born again, to be a new creature, to be raised from the dead. It is instantaneous for it is a transition from death to life. It is radical for the same reason; it is permanent for the life imparted in regeneration is immortal. Whom He calls He justifies, whom He justifies He glorifies. The change affects the whole soul. The mind is enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, the will is renewed and we are persuaded and enabled to accept Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the Gospel." (*Summary of Christian Doctrine*, p. 93.)

This regeneration is brought about by the Spirit of God. A man spiritually is dead, and is therefore the passive subject when moved upon by the Spirit of God. Having been born again, that is, given life, he may then as a regenerated person turn to God.

Dr. Archibald Alexander Hodge in his *Outline of Theology* says: "The Christian Church holds that in regeneration the Holy Ghost is the agent, and man the subject. The act of the Holy Spirit, in implanting a new principle, does not interfere with the essential activity of the soul itself, but simply gives to that activity a new direction, for the soul, though active, is nevertheless capable of being acted upon. And although the soul is necessarily active at the very time it is regenerated, yet it is rightly said to be passive with respect to that act of the Holy Spirit whereby it is regenerated. First, the soul, under the conviction of the Holy Ghost, and in the exercises of merely natural feelings, regards some aspect of saving truth and strives to embrace it." Second, the Holy Ghost, by an exertion of creative power, changes the governing disposition of the heart

in a manner inscrutable and by an influence not apprehended by the consciousness of the subject. Simultaneously, the soul exercises new affections and experimentally embraces the truth." (Pp. 459-460.)

It may be well to state here just what is the difference between regeneration and conversion, which are often confused. The soul is passive in regeneration, but active in conversion. It is one thing to have the spiritual nature changed; it is another thing for that changed spiritual nature to move into action.

Dr. A. A. Hodge clearly and concisely states it: "Regeneration is God's act; conversion is ours. Regeneration is the implantation of a gracious principle; conversion is the exercise of that principle. Regeneration is never a matter of direct consciousness to the subject of it; conversion always is such to the agent of it. Regeneration is a single act, complete in itself, and never repeated. Conversion as the beginning of holy living is the commencement of a series, constant, endless and progressive." (*Outline of Theology*, p. 460.)

The new birth is necessary, as Jesus Christ clearly and unequivocally said. His word to Nicodemus is a divine imperative—"Ye must be born again." It is necessary because that which is born of the flesh is flesh, while that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. This being so it is not strange that Jesus should say: "Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again." There is a vast difference between a mole and an eagle, between the "natural" man and the "spiritual" man renewed after the image of Jesus Christ.

Marcus Dods once said: "Beyond its own nature, no animal can act." This nature is given to it at birth

and is determined for all time. Just so a man cannot love, obey, and serve God fully through birth as a natural man, but being born again by water and the Spirit he is given a new nature, a heavenly nature, and henceforth acts according to that nature, even as before he acted according to the old nature. This new nature is not evolved from, nor is it a reformation of the old nature, but it is entirely new, given to a man at his second birth when regenerated, and it determines the nature and character of the man's spiritual life from then on.

Jesus said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." That is, all that one gets by natural generation is "flesh." To enter into the Kingdom of God, Jesus said one must be born of the Spirit. Dr. Reuben A. Torrey says in this connection: "No matter how refined and intelligent our ancestry, no matter how godly our fathers and mothers may have been, we do not get the Holy Spirit from them; all we get is flesh. It may be refined flesh, moral flesh, upright and very attractive flesh, but it is flesh; and they that are in the flesh cannot please God, nor inherit the Kingdom of God. The flesh is incapable of improvement. No more 'can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots' than can a man who is unregenerate attain to life pleasing to God. It is natural to eat, but not to love God. The unregenerated man is no more at home in spiritual things than a fish is out of water." (*Fundamental Doctrines of Christian Faith*, p. 217.)

One of the results of the new birth is that a man becomes a new creature, or a new creation: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things

are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Notice that it is a new creation, not the old nature made over. Our original nature can be improved by culture and education, but an improved nature is the same nature. There is a great difference between an ignorant savage and a civilized man of the world, but both have the same nature, and the difference is not one of kind but of degree. When a man is born from above, he becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Another result of the new birth is a love for the things of God. It is natural to eat, drink, sleep, think; but it is not natural to love God, to obey God, to serve God. The natural man is as much out of his element in God's presence as a fish out of water.

A third result is an outward transformation of one's life. The Christian life is not essentially an outwardly correct life, but an inward communion. One may have a rather correct life, as it strikes the eyes of man, without ever having fellowship with God in his heart. On the other hand, where there is an inward communion there are bound to be some outward transformations. "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). This change does not take place in a year. It is a growing, a developing thing. A baby one week old is as truly a human being as a mature man of fifty. But a child of God will grow and develop, for having been born from above of God, God will complete that which He has begun. The regenerated life is a life that in the main, in spite of obstacles and failures, will grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A fourth result of the new birth is love for the

brethren. This is not mere delight in the society of those whom we like, but it is an unselfish, sacrificial outgoing for the highest welfare of those who are of the household of faith. We cannot like everybody, not even all our fellow Christians, but we may in Christ Jesus love them all. John writes, "We know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). What a fellowship we have with those who are kindred spirits, who with us have tasted of the grace of God and found it good! We often say that "blood is thicker than water," and that is true. It may also be said that the fellowship we have with our fellow Christians may be closer than the fellowship we enjoy with some of our own flesh and blood who may not be Christians. There are those who think that they can love God, but not love their fellow believers. How can we love God whom we have not seen if we do not love our fellow men whom we have seen? A genuine love—and I define love in the sense in which it is used in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians—for those who are our fellow Christians, of whatever race or nation or color or circumstance, is a true mark of having been born again.

Again, the man who is born from above will believe that Jesus Christ is the true Son of God. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is begotten of God. If a man is born from above, he will believe that He is the Christ.

A further result of the new birth is victory in the life. Whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world (1 John 5:4). Jesus said: "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). "He that

is with us is stronger than he that is against us." If we give the Holy Spirit the right of way in heart and life, He will make Christ's victory our victory. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:1).

I believe that when a man is born again he will have a purpose and passion in his life to share Jesus Christ with others and to make Him known to all the world. What a marvellous change takes place when men are born from above. See Saul of Tarsus, educated, deeply religious, havocking the Church, crying out as he sees a Christian, 'Kill that man.' But see Paul, the new born man, Christ's man, with his bare back lashed for Christ's sake, stoned for the Name, persecuted unto death, yet in love pouring out his life—because he has become a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Who recognizes the old dirt in the glorious white rose, and who would believe that from the black, oozing mud there should blossom the glorious lotus? Who recognizes the low river thief in Jerry McAuley, or the wild, profligate youth in St. Augustine? Regeneration is a revolutionary change; old things indeed pass away; behold, all things become new.

If the new birth is so important, how then can one be born again? This is a most vital question. Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:5-6.) In other words, men are born again by the Spirit of God. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy

he saved us, through the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). God does work directly on human hearts, but more often He uses the Word of God through His Spirit soundly to convert men. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). It is when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as our personal Saviour that we are born again. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

How can one be born from above? One day I was walking through a field of beautiful clover in which a number of cows grazed. I stopped and plucked a handful of the beautiful blossoms, roots, dirt, and all. The clover is full of life, but the dirt, seen through any magnifying glass, is made up of a large number of tiny irregular stones. There is no life in them. They are the dearest of dead things. Yet in some unexplained, mysterious way, these little roots had reached down and touched those dead stones so that the dead stones were borne from above into the living grass of the field. The dead silica, potash, and lime now live. The mineral kingdom has been born from above into the vegetable kingdom. A cow eats the grass. What happens? The vegetable kingdom has been lifted up into a higher kingdom, that is, the animal kingdom. A man, representing the highest animal kingdom, kills the cow, and men partake of the flesh. Now the life of the lower

animal kingdom has been lifted up to become a part of the highest animal kingdom.

Above human existence there is a still higher life, the Christ life. The natural man is dead to that life because of sins and trespasses. But God in His infinite love and mercy stoops down from above in Jesus Christ His Son, and in some mysterious, yet very real, way touches our human and sinful life, and lifts us up so that we are born into the spiritual kingdom which is from above. In each instance the lower life was utterly unable to lift itself into the higher life. The higher kingdom had to stoop down and lift it up in order that it might become a partaker of its own higher life.

Jesus said, "Ye *must* be born again." He also said, "The Son of man *must* be lifted up." He made it clear that whosoever believeth in Him, lifted up on the Cross as the Saviour of men, should not perish but have eternal life. As we believe in this Christ we are born from above, pass from spiritual death to spiritual life, and through Jesus Christ have life abundant and life eternal.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

ONE must become a Christian before he begins to live the Christian life. Some people are seeking to live the Christian life before they become Christians; others who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour seem to think that there is little or nothing left for them to do. A Christian is to be distinguished from a mere church member. Not that church membership is unimportant, but a person may merely join the church without having had a personal experience of the saving power of Christ. A Christian is also to be distinguished from those who may reveal some Christian traits in their walk and conversation without ever having accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.

Gandhi undoubtedly has some Christian characteristics, but Gandhi declares himself to be a Hindu, and will not receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour from sin. On the other hand a person may be a true Christian and still be far removed from perfection. I once asked a distinguished leader of the Church how a pastor in dealing spiritually with the members of his

flock could distinguish between an unregenerate church member and a sinning Christian. He replied: "That is very difficult; oftentimes only God knows the difference." This does not mean that Christians should have low ideals or that they should not press on toward perfection.

How may a person enter the Christian life? On the divine side we have already treated of this in the chapter on The Holy Spirit and Man's Regeneration. On the human side, however, it is entered through saving faith. Before there can be faith there must be knowledge. No one can believe in a Saviour of whom he has not heard. Knowledge must precede faith. Knowledge about Christ comes before a knowledge of Christ. How important it is that the Gospel be preached in purity and power. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:13-14.)

One must not only know, but must intelligently assent to, the truth. Faith must rest on more secure foundations than emotion. Mere intellectual assent is not enough. It is possible for a man's mind to approve as true certain doctrines or truths and intellectually assent to them, without incorporating them into his heart and personally committing himself to the moral and spiritual issues that are involved. Divorce knowledge from faith, and education from evangelism, and the result is either fanaticism or sterility.

A certain lawyer declared to a friend that he could

not become a Christian because he could not believe that Jesus Christ arose from the dead. His friend asked him if he had thoroughly examined the evidence. He replied that he had not. His friend offered to submit to him the evidence that would prove to him that Christ had actually risen from the dead. The lawyer took the statement home with him and studied it. Several weeks later they met. "How goes it?" his friend inquired. And the lawyer replied: "I have examined very carefully the evidence you gave me, and I am convinced that beyond all reasonable doubt, on the basis of the evidence, Jesus Christ arose from the dead." Then lowering his voice and in a different tone he said: "I am no more a Christian now than I was before I considered the evidence. I have discovered that the chief difficulty why I am not a Christian is not in my head but in my heart."

To enter the Christian life one needs more than knowledge, evidence, and intellectual assent; there must be personal appropriation in the heart, saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). You are invited to dinner in a friend's home. Love prompted the invitation. The food is deliciously prepared. As a guest you are under no expense; your host is taking care of that. The chief course is a juicy, thick, tender steak. You are urged to partake. If you decline to eat, though "all things are now ready," though you need the strength that the meat will provide, though love urges you to do your part, so far as you are concerned it is

as though none of these things existed. But if you personally appropriate and assimilate the meat your brain and body are nourished, are built up, and you have abundance of life. So we understand what Jesus meant when He said: "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life" (John 6:54).

The faith that saves, the faith that brings us into vital communion with God through Jesus Christ, the faith that God honors and that brings to us salvation with its blessed benefits, is "a saving grace whereby we receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation as He is offered to us in the Gospel" (*Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Q. 86).

To come to Christ means to trust yourself to Christ. It means just what it means to trust in other ways. When I commit my earthly savings to a bank I trust that bank to take care of my money. When sick I turn myself over to a physician. It is evident that I am trusting a physician to do what he says he can do for me, if I put myself and my case in his hands. When I embark on an ocean liner I am trusting that particular vessel with my life, and to carry me safely to the other shore.

Justification cannot be secured by the keeping of the law because no man has ever perfectly kept that law. Human nature, being what it is, the law only brings to light the knowledge of sin. "By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. 3:20). The old requirement under law is, "This do, and thou shalt live." Obviously, the opposite is true, 'Do not this and ye shall die.' When man breaks the law of God, he is conscious of his shortcoming, but there is nothing in the law itself which can remove the

guilt and failure due to his sin. The law of God calls for perfect obedience. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. 3:10). On the other hand, God's Word makes it clear that a man is justified by God's free grace. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:9). So it is that a man is justified by faith. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:16). "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:4-5). Men are divided into two camps just here. They are either seeking to be saved by their own works, or through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is obvious that no man can be saved by his works and that it is "by grace that ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:8-10.)

Dr. William Evans sums it up in these words: "Men are justified judicially by God; meritoriously by Christ; mediately by faith and evidentially by works" (*Great Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 160).

It is by faith that a man is justified. The Apostle writes: "A man is justified by faith without the deeds

of the law" (Rom. 3:28). We live in a world of law. Physical laws make for health and well-being. Mental laws make for progress and peace. There are natural laws, and there are spiritual laws. There are laws which are made by men, and others which have been declared by God.

All human beings have broken the law of God. There is none righteous, no not one. In His infinite love and mercy, God took upon Himself in Jesus Christ the sins of man and the curse which came through His broken law. In Christ, God was reconciling the world unto Himself, redeeming and restoring man. "Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

The condition of salvation is that a man receive Christ as his Redeemer, and by faith alone. So doing, a man is justified by faith and is accepted of God. What does it mean to be justified by faith? The essential idea of the word "just" as used in the New Testament is that of "perfect conformity to all the requirements of the moral law." To justify in the New Testament sense means to declare a person to be just. "The ungodly are said to be justified without the deeds of the law, by the blood of Christ, by faith, freely, and of grace, through the agency of an Advocate, by means of a satisfaction, and of imputed righteousness (Rom. 3:20-28; 4:5-7; 5:1; Gal. 2:6; 3:11; 5:4; 1 John 2:2). (Hodge: *Outline of Theology*, pp. 496-497).

It is impossible to be justified by works; that is, by our unrighteousness. It is impossible because the law

of God demands perfect obedience. All works which are not perfect lead to condemnation, and no act of obedience at one time can atone for disobedience at another time. If we are justified by works, then Christ died for us in vain. If it were of works it would not be of grace. If we are justified by works it would afford cause for boasting. Since every man is a sinner, to be justified by the law is equally impossible for all.

I recall a university student who, hearing the subject discussed, said: "I don't understand such a big word." The best definition of justification is found in the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*: "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in His sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone." The believing sinner is justified because Christ, having borne his sins on the Cross, has been made unto him righteousness.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee;
 Let the water and the blood,
 From Thy riven side which flowed,
 Be of sin the double cure,
 Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Justification is a declaration on the part of the infinitely wise and Holy God that the law is satisfied. The law is like its Author, absolutely unchangeable and can be satisfied by nothing else than absolutely perfect righteousness. This was rendered by Christ as our representative, and His perfect righteousness is imputed to us as the sole and strictly legal ground of our

justification. Thus He was made for us the end of the law for righteousness, and we are made the righteousness of God in Him. Thus we see that justification originates in the grace of God, through the redemption and propitiatory work of Christ who has vindicated the law. It is always by faith and never by works. It is the judicial act of God whereby He justly declares righteous one who believes on Jesus Christ.

Justification is more than pardon. To pardon is to exercise a sovereign prerogative, to waive the execution of the penal sanctions of the law, just as a governor of a state may pardon a man who is guilty and imprisoned for crime. To justify is to declare that the demands of the law are satisfied, not waived. Pardon is the remission of the penalty of the law without the law having been satisfied. Christ's obedience, righteousness, and death on the Cross satisfied the demands of God's broken law, and thus becomes the ground of our justification.

If justification were only pardon, it would simply release us from the penalty of sin, but justification through faith in Christ secures not only pardon, but peace, grace, reconciliation, and our adoption as sons of God and as joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Therefore as we sinners turn to God and put our trust in Jesus Christ, we are justified by faith in this Christ who is our substitute, our righteousness, our one and only atoning Saviour. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, His justice having been completely satisfied through the righteousness of Christ. In witness whereof, His Holy Spirit has been given to us, His love is shed abroad in our hearts, and our fellowship with

Him is established. Inward peace of conscience comes to us, including a consciousness of our reconciliation with God.

Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling;
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save and Thou alone.

Repentance has never been a popular theme. In recent years very little emphasis has been laid upon it, if one is to judge by the sermon topics that appear in the press of the nation. In sharp contrast is the prominence that is given to repentance in the Word of God. We would expect an austere and rugged character like John the Baptist to strike the note of repentance, yet upon the lips of Jesus Christ also, at the very beginning of His ministry, was the emphatic declaration, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). Peter filled with the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost cried out to the people, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

There is a repentance which only has a name to live and which in truth is not repentance. The Apostle Paul in his message to the Church at Corinth said: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7:10). Others may know the poignant pain of soul-eating remorse, which like acid burns its way into the inner parts, but remorse is not repentance. Worldly habits or sinful practices may lead to regret,

but the inconvenience that follows some act of sin, or the social embarrassment that arises from some moral lapse, must not be confused with repentance. The sorrow that comes because your sin has found you out, or because some person has found you out in your sinning, is not repentance. Some reputation spoiled, some advantage missed, some pride wounded—these lead to regret but not necessarily to repentance.

Irreligious persons or out and out unbelievers may be rebuked by some written word of God or by the same word incarnate in some human life. Their vanity may be wounded, their anger may be excited, their resentment may be aroused, but this is not repentance. The pages of Scripture are strewn with the sketches of men and women who regretted exceedingly their evil ways, but whose repentance was not unto life but rather unto death. Cain cried out: "My punishment is more than I can bear." Saul was sorry, but instead of falling into the arms of God's mercy, he fell on the point of his sword. Judas, with abhorrence, cast the hated pieces of silver from him, but instead of throwing himself at the feet of Christ, threw himself into a suicide's grave. The rich young ruler was attracted by Jesus, and the Master looked upon him with the eyes of love, but he would not change his mind or his way of life and so "went away sorrowful." His sorrow was not repentance unto life. Godly sorrow worketh repentance that is unto life.

Repentance unto life is "a saving grace whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God with full pur-

pose of and endeavor after new obedience." Repentance means "to change your mind," "to turn and walk in a different direction." A man is walking toward a certain city, but if through ignorance or wilfulness he is walking in the wrong direction, unless he changes his mind and turns about he will not arrive at his destination. It is not only hating your sin but forsaking it that is involved in repentance. A man may hate the effects of sin, and still continue to love the sin itself. Repentance is not only abhorring that which is evil, but turning from it. It is not only turning away from the sin, but turning unto God.

Conviction is not repentance. People come under conviction, but they do not repent. It is one thing to be called at six o'clock in the morning; it is another thing to get up. It is one thing to be awake in bed; it is another thing to take a cold shower, dress, and go to work. A farmer may weed and harrow his field, but it is another thing to sow good seed in it. To paint a pump does not kill the typhoid germs in the well. Repentance is hatred of your sin, the turning from it, and in the strength of Christ, with full purpose and endeavor, the honest effort to walk in new obedience. The truest and tenderest picture of repentance is found in the parable of the Prodigal Son. He came to know his condition; he knew something of what he had lost; he was conscious of desperate need. But he did not repent until he cried out, "I will arise and go to my father." Repentance became real and actual when, in all his rags and misery, he actually began walking toward home.

Repentance is not only a mental act, but an emo-

tional experience. Feelings do have their place in Christian experience. When the Corinthians truly repented they were "made sorry" after a godly manner, and this godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of. A man may not go to the "mourner's bench" outwardly when he truly repents, but he certainly will go inwardly and bare his soul before Him who searcheth the heart and from whom nothing can be hid. When the publican "beat upon his breast" he was not only deploring and confessing and forsaking his sin, but emotionally he was experiencing the sorrow of a true penitent.

Faith indeed is the condition of entrance into salvation, but repentance is the moral and psychological condition of faith. As eternal life is unattainable without faith, so saving faith is unattainable without repentance. You can't keep your cake and eat it too. You can't hold on to your sins and at the same time expect God to relieve you of that which you hold fast to. Faith precedes repentance, but saving faith includes a godly sorrow which worketh repentance.

Does a man have power within himself to repent? No and yes. In 2 Timothy 2:25 we read, "If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." In Acts 11:18 the statement is made: "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

In one sense man cannot repent, but in another sense he is led to repentance as he hears the call of the Gospel to repent and believe it. The Holy Spirit bears witness to that redeeming Gospel as it is presented, so that the hearer is given grace to repent and to believe.

In Luke 24:47-48 we read: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." We are also told that the goodness of God leads men to repentance, while the chastisements of God likewise restore his backsliding children.

Men are led to repentance through Christ's revelation of the beauty and blessedness of righteousness in contrast with the ugliness and wretchedness of sin. His revelation of the love of God and His Fatherly compassion toward alienated, sinning men reaches the hardest hearts. The example of His own life in renouncing self and His unselfish service to man awakens man. But where the law of God and the life of Jesus may not reach men, the Saviour on His Cross, where He suffered and died in man's stead for his reconciliation and redemption, has reached all kinds of men of every generation. What Christ actually did through His death and Resurrection to redeem men from the curse and shame, from the penalty and power, of sin is the most powerful factor in leading men to repentance. By His Holy Spirit God worketh that sorrow and hatred of sin in men's hearts that lead them to renounce and forsake it. By holding out to men His offers of forgiving grace and of restoring power He enables men to forsake sin and to overcome it.

No, not despairingly,
Come I to Thee;
No, not distrustingly,
Bend I the knee;

Sin hath gone over me,
Yet is this still my plea,
Jesus hath died.

Before you can develop a Christian life, you must have a Christian life to develop. Uniting with the Church is not the end, but the beginning, of the Christian life. Joining the Church is putting on the uniform, but serving and sacrificing as a good soldier of Jesus Christ is another thing.

God commands us in His word to develop our Christian life: "Grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). The same Apostle also says: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:5-8.)

The Christian life is not static but dynamic. It begins as a revolution; it continues as an evolution. The Christian life is a growth, a development, an unfolding. "Work out your own salvation. . . . For it is God which worketh in you." (Phil. 2:12-13.) There are different stages in the Christian growth. There is the blossom stage. How beautiful and fragrant an apple tree is when in full bloom in springtime. Later there follows what may be called the green apple stage. In the Christian life it sometimes is not so pleasant as the

blossom stage. It is that period which follows the first joys of conversion, when one awakes to the fact that the old nature is not dead even though a new nature has been given of God. It is the period of testings and temptations, of failures as well as of successes, of trials as well as triumphs. The ripe fruit period comes later as men and women become mature in godliness and mellowed in their Christian experience.

The development of the Christian life involves the use of means. To grow in grace one must use the means of grace. It is essential to physical health and well-being that we have good food, pure air, and proper exercise. It is equally essential to our spiritual life. The Christian must look always and only to Christ. Too often we think that we can find what we need for the Christian life in the good things of this world, or draw upon accumulated resources in Christian character achieved. But this is a mistake; for a life that is supernaturally given from above must draw its life also from above.

A farmer planted a little tree beside a stream on his farm. The tree languished and failed to grow or blossom. For several years the farmer waited and hoped that it might show signs of a developing life, but it just barely kept alive. One spring it began to bud vigorously, blossoms appeared and for the first time it gave indication of bearing fruit. Amazed at the change the farmer investigated. He discovered that the tap root of the tree, seeking in vain for nourishment in the poor soil in which it found itself, had thrust itself out across a little bridge that spanned the stream and had put its roots down in the rich soil on the other side. "If ye then be

risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:1-3.)

The growing life is the abiding life. "Abide in me, and I in you," said Jesus. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." (John 15:4.) A Christian abides in Christ when he leaves no sin or fault unconfessed or unjudged, and when through a yielded spirit he is living a fruitful life within the will of God, holding communion with the loved Unseen. The Christian life is not only begun by Christ, but maintained by Christ. At its highest and best, it is expressed in the words of that Master Christian, the Apostle Paul: "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Jesus Christ gives His life not only for the sheep, but to them. It is eternal life that He gives, life that not only endures forever, but which in its quality is God's life. It is imparted life, that comes through a vital relationship to Christ, with Him abiding in us and we in Him.

Some Christians try to experience the Christian life by practicing precepts and rules. There is a real truth here. The Bible is the great revelation of the mind of God concerning human life. No inner life can take the place of this divine revelation, but it furnishes no dynamic. "The law was weak through the flesh." A chart shows us where we are on the trackless deep and where we ought to go, but it does not carry us across the open seas. Other Christians try to realize the Christian life by imitating the example of Christ. "What would Jesus

do?" they ask. Ah, yes, but we Christians are not strong enough to do it. Our ignorance of Christ, our habits of thought and will, our unspirituality and sin—these prevent us from successful imitation of Him. That perfect life only teases us or mocks us. The mere imitation of the life of Christ drives a man either to despair or divinity. The secret of living the Christian life is in letting Christ into the heart and life, permitting Him to be in control and letting Him live His life out in us and through us. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. 2:20). Not all at once does Christ gain complete control over our powers and faculties, accustomed as they are to the rule of self; but walking in the Spirit, His peace, His joy, His power are increasingly realized.

The Christian life has its distinctive characteristics. As one sees it set forth in the New Testament it is always characterized by holiness. This is more than good conduct, morality or correctness in walk and conversation. It is even something purer and finer than righteousness. It is an essential spiritual healthiness or wholeness of the inner man, his mind, affections, and will being made over and permeated by the Holy Spirit. The Christian life is an incarnation, a revelation, of truth in a pure life. "Follow . . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).

The Christian life is marked by love. Spiritual love is born of God. The best analysis of it is found in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. What a fellowship the early Church manifested! The fruit of the Spirit is love, and the love that those Christians had for one another amazed the pagan world. More than once across the Roman Empire it was said of this radiant

fellowship: "Behold! how these Christians love one another." Christians are to defend and propagate the truth in love. We are not only to love those of the household of faith, but we are to love our enemies, and our neighbors as ourselves.

Another characteristic of the Christian life is boldness. The fear of man goes out when the love of God comes in. Men who are physically brave may be moral cowards. A Christian will witness. He will not be ashamed of Christ. He will seize and make opportunities to speak a good word for Christ. Without holy boldness the Christian life may become an insipid or unworthy thing. Our day needs men and women who have this grace of holy boldness. Wherever they appear men will take knowledge that they have been with Jesus and learned of him.

Another characteristic of the Christian life is joy. We must not confuse it with a certain "cheeriness." I admire the effort of people who have no Christian resources to manufacture a forced cheerfulness, though it is oftentimes pathetic in its effort and unreality. Christian joy is God's gift, the fruit of the Holy Spirit. This joy is independent of circumstances. Paul and Silas facing death in prison sang hymns of praise. In spite of sorrow and disappointment, in the midst of hard and difficult circumstances, the Christian may rejoice. Genuine revivals and abounding spiritual life produce singing. As someone has said: "Every John Wesley has his brother Charles; every Moody his Sankey; every Chapman his Alexander; and every Sunday his Rodeheaver." The Christian religion is a religion of joy. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).

The Christian is a man who prays. The Christian life is maintained by prayer. It is the native breath of the child of God. Prayer helps to make God real. It brings Him near and gives to us the assurance of His presence. Prayer makes for growth in the Christian life. It illuminates truth. It throws a light upon the Word of God, and makes vivid and helpful its lessons for our own lives. Prayer delivers from fear, lifts the load of anxieties, brings wisdom, and scatters loneliness. Prayer enables us to help our friends to their best. The power of intercession is mighty, and we can do more for those we love by way of the throne of grace than in any other way. Through prayer the Christian learns to believe that all things work together for good to them that love God. Through prayer one endures as seeing Him who is invisible.

The Christian will pray not only for his own intimate circle, but for all kinds and conditions of men. This mighty implement which God has put at our disposal enables us to advance His Kingdom on earth as we are faithful in the use of it. Prayer not only keeps the individual spiritual life aglow, but prayer starts revivals, releases the power of God, and when offered in the Name that is above every name accomplishes miracles. The Christian will pray regularly for individuals, for the Church, for the state, and the great interests of the Kingdom of God. "Ask great things of God, and expect great things from God."

The Christian is one who is at peace with God. He has made his peace through the blood of the Cross; justified by faith, he is at peace with God. He knows the peace of God in his heart, and that peace of God keeps

his heart and mind in Christ Jesus. He is a man who pursues peace, who is a peacemaker, and who seeks to promote peace between individuals, between classes of society, between nations, and throughout the world. The Christian is at war with sin, everlastingly in conflict with all that is evil in his own life, and in the world's life. He loves the sinner, but he hates the sin. He will not compromise with that which Christ came to destroy. The Christian forgives other people, his fellow Christians, people who are unlovely or unkind, yes, even his enemies. Having been forgiven much, he too will forgive much.

The Christian is in search of souls. He is a soul winner. He is ever seeking to witness by word of mouth and in love. He longs to win other persons to Jesus Christ. He will be interested in all efforts whereby individuals may be brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Christian is a citizen of the world. He is a commissioned man; his field is not only his own locality, but the whole wide world. He ever hears ringing in his heart the words: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." He will not be satisfied until every life and all of life are brought under the sway of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian is a man who is in love with Christ. Jesus is the great Lover of his soul. Above all loves he puts the love of Christ first and knows the sweet and growing fellowship with Him who is his Saviour, his Master, and his Beloved Friend. He knows he will be like Him when he sees Him face to face.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Church is unique among the institutions of earth. It is both a divine and a human institution, and in this sense is patterned after its Lord, its Head, who is both human and divine. There are many opinions held about the Church today. There are those who highly commend the Church; there are others who sharply criticize. There are some who believe that the Church is able to do little or nothing for the welfare of humanity; there are others who believe that the Church ought to do everything and minister to men in every way.

Christ identifies Himself in a very real way with the Church. When Saul was on the way to Damascus persecuting the Church, he was met by Christ. In reply to his question, "Who art thou, Lord?" Christ said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Those who throw their barbs of criticism at the Church should remember they are striking at the heart of Christ.

The word "church" is a translation of the Greek term *ecclesia*. This word means to "call out," so that the members of the church are the "called-out" ones.

After Peter's great confession, Jesus declared unto him: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." On the day of Pentecost, under the preaching of Peter, three thousand persons were added unto the Church, and a little later on five thousand more. In Acts 2:47 we learn that the Lord "added to the church daily such as were being saved." The Church not only grew in Jerusalem, but through the missionary activity of the Apostle Paul

spread to Antioch, through Asia Minor, and across the Hellespont into Europe. Churches sprang up in various cities and communities and had both Jews and Gentiles in their membership.

Who constitute the Church of Jesus Christ? That is, who are the true members or the real members of His body? One day Jesus turned to His disciples and said: "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man am?" and they replied: "Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias and others Jeremias or one of the prophets." This did not satisfy Jesus then; it does not satisfy Jesus now. So He turned to His disciples and asked them: "But whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then it was that Jesus said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The Church is not made up of persons who acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Saviour, but do not put their trust in Him; neither is it made up of those who have a sincere faith in Him as a great teacher or perfect human being; nor is it made up of people who may believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God but who never confess Him in word or life. The Church of Christ is constituted of human beings everywhere who savingly believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, their Redeemer, and who confess their faith in Him before the world.

What Is a Church?

A band of faithful men
 Met for God's worship in some humble room,
 Or screened from foes by midnight's starlit gloom,
 On hillside or lone glen
 To hear the counsels of God's Holy Word
 Pledged to each other and their common Lord.
 These, few as they may be,
 Compose a church, such as in pristine ages
 Defied the tyrant's steel, the bigot's rage.
 For, when but two or three,
 Whate'er the place, in faith's communion meet,
 There, with Christ present, is a church complete.

The Church must also be thought of as visible and invisible; as actual and ideal, as local and universal. The Church visible is composed of all those communicant members with their children whose names are on the roll of the Church, while the invisible Church is composed of all those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The actual Church consists of those believing but imperfect people who are members here on earth of the visible body of Christ, while the ideal Church consists of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus and who have awaked in His likeness. The local Church is a group of believers meeting in one place at stated times for the worship of God, while the Church universal consists of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ of every race and tongue, of every kind and circumstance, who meet for Christian worship and the service of God throughout the earth.

In the brief statement of the Reformed Faith we have this concerning the Church: "We believe in the Holy Catholic Church of which Christ is the only head. We believe that the Church invisible consists of all the redeemed and that the Church visible embraces all who profess the true religion together with their children. We receive to our communion all who confess and obey Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour and we hold fellowship with all believers in Him."

When we speak of the Holy Catholic Church we are not referring to the Roman Catholic Church. The word "catholic" means "universal." The Roman Catholic Church is only a part of the Church. Protestants have as much right to the designation "catholic" as have Roman Catholics. It is only popular usage, abbreviating the longer title "Roman Catholic" to "Catholic," that has confused the meaning of it in the minds of the uninformed or the unthinking. It would be less misleading if we referred to the great churches of Christendom as the Greek Church or the Roman Church or the Protestant Church, or, if you wanted to include the word "Catholic," to refer to these bodies as the Greek Catholic Church, the Roman Catholic Church, or the Protestant Catholic Church.

In the *Westminster Standards*, Confession of Faith, we read: "The Catholic or Universal Church which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the Head, thereof; and is the bride, the body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

"The visible Church, which is also Catholic or Universal, under the Gospel . . . consists of all those

throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. Unto this Catholic visible Church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto. This Catholic [or universal] Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less, visible. And particular [or local] churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.

“The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth, to worship God according to His will. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only Head of the Church, and the claim of any man to be the vicar of Christ and the Head of the Church, is unscriptural, without warrant in fact, and is a usurpation dishonoring to the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Ch. 25.)

“And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your father which is in heaven” (Matt. 23:9-10).

In the New Testament, the Church is described in various ways. It is the body of Christ, He being its Head. The Church is an organization, but it is more than that; it is an organism. Just as the branches abide

in the vine, so the body of the Church is vitally related to its Head, Jesus Christ. Just as the human body has many parts, so the Church as the body of Christ has many members in particular. When one part suffers, all suffer. When one rejoices, all rejoice. When one is honored, all share in that honor. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many." (1 Cor. 12:12-14.)

The Church is spoken of as the Bride of Christ, Jesus being the Bridegroom. The Church is also spoken of as a building, a temple, an habitation for God's Spirit. This building "is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:20-21. Compare also 1 Cor. 3:9-17).

Generally speaking, all churches throughout the world, as to their government are divided into three classes: the prelatical, the purely democratic, and the representative. The Roman Catholic, the Greek Catholic, the Anglican, the Protestant Episcopal, the Methodist Episcopal, and all bodies whose authority is vested in one supreme bishop, like the Pope, or in a body of bishops like the Episcopalian or Methodist Churches, hold to the prelatical or autocratic form of government. At the opposite extreme are those which in their government hold to a pure democracy, each local church being

independent and a law unto itself, of which the Congregational and Baptist churches are examples. The representative form of government is best seen in the Presbyterian Church. The Roman Catholic Church alone regards the church as infallible, while all true Protestant churches hold to the Scriptures as infallible, the only rule of faith and practice.

Dr. Henry W. Frost has an exceptionally clear and comprehensive statement on the Church. "It is chosen by God, redeemed by Christ and regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. It is made up of those who were Jews or Gentiles but who have become through faith, new creations in Christ Jesus. Its members individually and collectively are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, separated to divine worship and service and destined to be kings and priests unto God the Father. The spiritual standing of the members of the Church is with Christ in the heavenlies. Their physical state is in the midst of the world. . . . The Church, through the Spirit is one body though with many members. As such it has its earthly and visible organization, the essential elements of which are the two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is related to the individual and is the confession of that individual's faith in Christ. The Lord's Supper is related to the Church as a whole and is the corporate witness to the unity of the Church in each generation and its continuity through all generations." (*Outline Bible Studies*, pp. 212-215.) The Church is described in the New Testament as a forgiven people, a cleansed people, a sanctified people, a confessing people, a witnessing people, a suffering people, a waiting people, and, finally, a rewarded people.

The Church was founded by Him, purchased with His own blood, His bride beloved; the Church, where the little children find the way of life; the Church, from whose doors there go into all the world the streams that purify and ennoble and redeem life; the Church, the chief of police in every town, in every city, in every nation; the Church, the custodian of the oracles of God, the lighthouse from which streams forth the light that scatters the darkness of the earth; the Church, the chief factor in making the kingdoms of this world "the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ."

The Church of Christ is not called to do everything, but to specialize. A Church is to specialize in the truth she teaches. All truth is of God. The Church should be sympathetic towards all truth. She must distinguish however, between hypothesis and truth, between theory and fact. The Church is not called to bear witness to God, but to God in Christ; the Christ who was born of a Virgin; the Christ who lived His sinless life here on earth; the Christ who suffered and died on the Cross; the Christ who arose again the third day; who ascended and who one day will return again. The Church is to specialize in the truth she teaches.

The Church is to specialize in the life she lives. This life is distinctive, is supernatural, in its origin and power. In the days of the early Church it turned the world upside down, and wherever that life still appears the world takes knowledge that these men have been with Jesus and learned of Him.

The Church also specializes in the work she does. The Church is vitally interested in all kinds of good, in what makes for the weal of the individual and the wel-

fare of society. The Church however, must put foremost the winning of individuals to Jesus Christ. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples" (make Christians) "of all the nations." The Church must reveal and interpret God's truth and love to men. The minister is a prophet as well as an evangelist, a pastor and teacher as well as a prophet. Individual Christians are to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, that they may more and more become like Him whose they are and whom they serve. The Church must make Christ known to all the world. Its supreme business is to evangelize the world with the Gospel. If the Church is not missionary in spirit and practice she has missed her calling and will die. It is just as true of churches as it is of individuals, that those who save their lives lose them while those who lose their lives for Christ's sake and the Gospels's shall save them.

The Church is to specialize in the leadership she follows. There are many voices within the Church today as well as many counsellors and advisers without. Pastors should be leaders. The officers of the Church should lead, but the Supreme Leader of the Church is the Holy Spirit, the executive of the Godhead on earth, the divine administrator of both the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church of Christ. There is much reliance on human agencies and human leadership today. They have their place. We need however to recover our faith in the Holy Spirit as a Person and to specialize in His leadership. Recognizing His personality, honoring His guidance, seeking and accepting His infilling, the Church again will become the known collective society of saintly souls, to all her enemies will be terrible as an army with banners, and to a sinning,

wistful, and seeking world she will be the clear way of life and the very gate of heaven.

I love Thy Church, O God :
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend ;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end.

Sure as Thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given,
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

CHAPTER VII

THINGS TO COME

THE RETURN OF OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST referred to His coming again on a number of occasions. His sayings, however, on this subject are not always easy to interpret. They do not always refer to the same event. A study of the Gospels reveals at least five "comings" of which Jesus spoke from time to time.

Jesus meant by His coming again the continuance of His own life after death, which life would be made available in free and full measure to those who should believe upon Him. Jesus meant by His coming again that He would, as the Risen One, enter into fellowship with His disciples in a closer and more spiritual reunion, and through the Holy Spirit would return to abide with them alway. By His coming again He meant He would remove His disciples from their toils and struggles here on earth and take them to His Father's house, that where He was they might be also. Some have understood His coming again to mean that in the great crises of history He would be present, as at the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of the Jewish state. Above all else He meant by His second coming His final appearance at the end of the dispensation. He would sit in

judgment over all classes and nations of men, to appraise their character, to apportion their merit or demerit, to decide their destinies, to overthrow all evil, and to bring the Kingdom of God to its supreme triumph and glory.

The Return of our Lord is popularly referred to among most people as "the Second Coming." This is doubtless done to distinguish it from the first coming when, born of a virgin, he was cradled in the Bethlehem stable nineteen hundred years ago. But nowhere does there appear in the Bible the phrase "second coming." The Old Testament prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah under two aspects, that of rejection and suffering and that of revealed glory and power. Often these two aspects were blended, and Peter in his Epistle indicates that the prophets themselves were perplexed by this seeming contradiction. In the New Testament the teaching is clear and has reference solely to His Second Coming. Christ said He would return, and this promised return of our Lord has a prominent place in the Acts, Epistles, and Revelation.

The Second Coming of our Lord is definitely stated in the creeds of the Christian Church. In the Apostles' Creed we confess before the world that He will come to judge the quick and the dead. A Christian man is never buried without the minister in the committal service referring to the coming of our Lord. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, looking for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come through our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose coming in glorious majesty the earth and the sea shall give up their dead and the mortal bodies of those who sleep in Him shall

be changed and made like unto His own glorious body."

At every Communion Service, when the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is celebrated, the minister emphasizes the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in the words of the Apostle Paul: "For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Dr. J. R. Kaye, editor of the Analytical Bible, says: "The Second Coming of Christ is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion. . . . It is mentioned three hundred and eighteen times in the New Testament. Christ is coming again to receive His own and will come in the glory of the Father with the holy angels. At His coming the saints will be caught up with the angels in the clouds and meet the Lord in the air to be with Him forever. He is coming to fashion anew the body of our humiliation that we may be conformed to the body of His glory. He is coming to reckon with His servants and to render unto every man according to his deeds; He is coming to judge the living and the dead." (P. 117.)

As Luke records in the opening chapter of the Book of the Acts, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Canon Liddon, preaching in St. Paul's, London, one day exclaimed: "If Christ is not coming again in glory, then let us turn the key on the west gate of this cathedral."

May I call attention just here to the mistakes that have been made, the errors that have been held, and the wrong emphases that have been placed upon this great truth of the Second Coming of our Lord. The very nature of this truth, in that it deals with something in

the future, exposes it to the extravagances of the unbalanced enthusiast, the inferential errors of the special or prejudiced pleader, and the disproportionate emphasis of those who are weary of this world's ways and who long to escape from them.

On the other hand, there are many who neglect this great truth and give little or no place to it in their belief or practice. Much of this arises from ignorance. Many have never read, and have studied less what the Bible teaches us concerning the return of our Lord. Many condemn or ridicule what they know nothing or little about. It must be justly said however, that the extravagances to which some have gone in their dealing with this great truth have alienated many from even a fair or honest consideration of it and have left wrong and inadequate impressions in their minds. But neglect of the Second Coming may be a more unfortunate mistake than the distortion of it.

Martin Luther once said: "I feel as if Jesus Christ died yesterday, so fresh, so vivid should be our lives and thankfulness!" But Frances Ridley Havergal commenting on this, said: "But may we add, 'and as if He were coming today.' Then our lives would indeed be rich in remembrance and radiant in anticipation."

Some years ago there was a woman in London who owned a white coach with silver trimmings and had six white horses with white and silver harness to draw it. Each day she had it carefully gone over to see that it was in perfect condition, and then had it brought out before her house to be ready for the Coming of her Lord. Dr. Parker of the City Temple used to tell his congregation about her, how the crowd would gather to

watch and some would tap their foreheads. Then Dr. Parker would thunder out: "Who is crazy, that woman who watches always for His coming, or you and I who never give it a thought?" Jesus said: "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." (Mark 13:37.)

But here I want to give a word of warning to those who overemphasize this great truth, who draw unscriptural inferences and sometimes inferences from inferences in dealing with the Word of God, who bring their sincere but nevertheless human interpretations to certain events and happenings of world-wide interest and read out of this and into that some Scripture to fit them. Experience and history point out the peril of this procedure. These well-intentioned people have so often been mistaken that their activities in this sphere only bring into disfavor the Christian belief in the Second Coming of Christ.

This does not mean that we are not to let our minds play upon the great facts of our day and generation, to try to discern what the signs of our times may be and may mean. But in this field of interpretation or speculation, probably more than in any other, just because it deals with the future and the reading of the future, Bible students and especially ardent believers in the Second Coming of our Lord should be very careful to observe this basic principle: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."

I like to think of God's great revelation to the children of men as a temple of truth. The deep, bed rock foundation is there, the many rooms are there, each for its appointed purpose, and crowning all is the heaven-

pointed spire. In the great and beautiful temple of Christian truth, the Second Coming of our Lord is the culminating and crowning truth. God wants his children to be familiar with every nook and cranny of His temple of truth; to have, as John the beloved Apostle beautifully puts it, "the run of the house"; to live in all of it and to be at home in every part of it. Some Christians sit down in the basement of the temple of truth most of the time; others occupy this room or that and, like tourists in a great cathedral, become so enamored of one corner or part of it that they miss even more wonderful parts. Other children of God find their chief glory in the heaven-pointed spire and climbing, remain there. The Second Coming of Christ is not only an important, but it is the crowning, truth for Christians of this church age. But in God's great temple of truth who would desire to remain in the tower or spire all the time? Let us familiarize ourselves with all the truth of God, hold it proportionately and be filled with the Spirit of truth. Let us be men and women who are fully instructed and harmoniously balanced in the truth of God, reflecting the beauty and balance, the glory and completeness, of Him who came full of grace and truth.

Is the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to be premillennial or postmillennial? There is a difference of opinion in the Christian Church on this question. Most of the important creeds merely express belief in the Second Coming without going into the question of whether that coming is postmillennial or premillennial.

Dr. Henry W. Frost, in a fine outline of this whole subject, has indicated from the Scriptures the salient points concerning the Second Coming of Christ. Christ's

coming will be personal. Jesus said, "I will come" 1 Thess. 4:16 says: "The Lord himself will descend from heaven." Rev. 22:7 says: "I come quickly"; and a well-known passage says: "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner" (Acts 1:11).

The coming of Christ will be literal, it is claimed. "In like manner" as He went. Some interpret this passage to mean that he will come on Olivet from whence He ascended. (Compare Zech. 14:1-4.) Christ's coming will be visible to the Church, to the Jews, and to the world. His coming will be glorious for He will come in the glory of the Father, in the glory of His own Person, in the glory of the saints, and in the glory of the holy angels.

Again Christ's coming will be sudden, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, like a flash of lightning. It will be unexpected; men will deny His coming, be unprepared for His coming, will be sleeping. Christ will come as a thief in the night. Dr. Frost points out that Jesus' coming will be in judgment against the professing Church, against the anti-Christ, against the false prophet, against the nations, against all the ungodly. Christ will come as a king and as a king He shall reign on David's throne to rule over Israel, to rule over the nations, to be King over all the earth. As King of kings He will reign in glory and power. His coming will be, first for the saints, and then with the saints. He will come from the third heaven into the air for the saints. He will come from heaven to earth with the saints. The purpose of His coming will be to establish the Millennium. Gospel preaching in this age is not expected to convert the world, but it is to call out a people for His

Name. The Church is to be gathered out of every name and tongue, nation and race, but the world itself will become more and more evil. This evil it is maintained will be subdued only by His personal coming. After His coming, the Kingdom is established and the millennium or the reign of a thousand years begins.

The coming of Christ will be blessed in that it will be the time of union with Christ, of reunion among the saints, of receiving the likeness of Christ in the Resurrection. It will be the time of reward and of triumph to the Apostles, to the Church, to the redeemed Jews. It will be the time of putting down wrong and of lifting up right, the time of universal peace and universal blessing. The Second Coming of Christ will be speedy, for the Scriptures declare that the time is near, that the Judge is at the door, that the Lord is at hand—"Behold, I come quickly." (*Frost: Outline Bible Studies*, pp. 326-329.)

There is undoubtedly something to be said for both the postmillennial and the premillennial views. A case may be made out for each from the Scriptures. Whatever view you may hold, be tolerant and kindly of your fellow Christians who may hold different views. Above all, believe in His coming again, look for his appearing, and let the sureness and glory of it influence your life and service. To hold this hope from the premillennial point of view does not paralyze spiritual life or cut the nerve of Christian effort. When held rightly the opposite is true.

Some of the greatest Gospel preachers, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries of recent times have held it. Spurgeon, Moody, Talmadge, Gordon, McIntosh,

Muller, MacLaren, Pierson, Moorehead, Hudson Taylor, Chapman, Torrey, Biederwolf, F. B. Meyer, Jowett, Campbell Morgan, Charles R. Erdman, Robert E. Speer, and many others have held to the premillennial coming of our Lord. To believe that Christ will return to set up His Kingdom does not make the Gospel out as having failed.

To believe in the Second Coming of our Lord does not prevent one from working and praying for world peace, or from doing all within one's power to make this world a better place in which to live. All that we can do to bring Christ to every life and to all of life is that much gain. Everything done for the Kingdom only helps to bring the King back. A living faith in His return, a real holding of this hope is a powerful motive for holy living. In this sense, it is one of the most practical doctrines in the Christian faith, for "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).

No one knows the time when Christ will return. Some people are very foolish and try to fix the time. Others stress the imminence of His return, and if by that they mean, as many do, that He is coming in the very near future as men count time, then I believe that they too may be making a mistake. We do not know. Christ Himself we are told, does not know: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

It may be tonight, or it may not be for a thousand years or longer. Our part is to prepare ourselves, to sanctify ourselves, to witness to Christ, to make known

the Gospel, to help every cause that helps mankind, to be ardent supporters of world-wide missionary work, and at the same time be on the lookout for His coming, to watch as our Master told us: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrow, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." (Mark 13:35-37.)

In the crimson of the morning, in the whiteness of the
noon;
In the amber glory of the day's retreat,
In the midnight, robed in darkness, in the gleaming of the
moon,
I listen for the coming of His feet.

I have heard His weary footsteps on the sands of Galilee,
On the temple's marble pavement, on the street,
Worn with weight of sorrow, faltering up the slopes of
Calvary,
The sorrow of the coming of His feet.

Down the minster-aisles of splendor, from betwixt the
cherubim,
Through the wondering throng, with motion strong and
fleet,
Sounds His victor tread, approaching with a music far and
dim,
The music of the coming of His feet.

Sandaled not with sheen of silver, girdled not with woven
gold,

Weighted not with shimmering gems and odors sweet,
But white-winged and shod with glory in the Tabor-light
 of old,
The glory of the coming of His feet.

He is coming, O my spirit, with His everlasting peace,
With his blessedness immortal and complete,
He is coming, O my spirit, and His coming brings release;
I listen for the coming of His feet.

THE LAST JUDGMENT

It is not easy to write about the last judgment. Personally the writer does not recall ever having heard a sermon on this solemn subject. It is so tremendous in its issues that one should preach it in fear and trembling, but the whole counsel of God cannot be made known unless one considers this last great assize. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we would persuade men to flee from the wrath to come.

“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). The Scriptures teach that there is to be a general resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, at the time of the return of Christ. “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2). “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that

have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29). “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.” (Rev. 20:12-13.)

There are seven major judgments emphasized in God’s Word and each is invested with special significance. There is the judgment of the believer’s sins in the Cross of Christ; that judgment is already past. At this judgment Satan himself was judged, and his power over the believer broken. Here the sins of believers have been judged in Jesus Christ lifted up on the Cross. It resulted in death for Christ, but justification for the believer, who can never again be put in danger. “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him” (Romans 5:9). “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

Again, there is the believer’s self-judgment. There must be a continual judging of sin by the believer as sin comes up in his life. Paul writes: “For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged” (1 Cor. 11:31). As Dr. Scofield finely puts it: “Self-judgment is not so much the believer’s moral condemnation of his own ways or habits, as of himself, for allowing such

ways. Self-judgment avoids chastisement. If neglected, the Lord judges and the result is chastisement, but never condemnation." "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32).

Again, there is the judgment of the believer's works. Paul writes: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). This is the judgment of the believer's works, and not his sins which were judged on the Cross. They had been atoned for by Christ and are remembered "no more for ever." But every work must come into judgment. "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother, for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14:10). The result of this judgment of the believer's works is "reward" or "loss" of the reward. "But he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. 3:15). This judgment does not fix destiny but determines, according to the believer's works, whether he shall receive reward or loss.

Then there is the judgment of the nations at the return of Christ. Some people confuse this judgment with that of the Great White Throne. Read the passage in Matthew 25:31-46 as Christ imparted these solemn truths to us, and then contrast it with the passage in Revelation 20:11-15 which sets forth the judgment of the Great White Throne, and you will observe the contrast. In this judgment of the nations, Dr. Scofield points out that there is no resurrection; the persons

judged are living nations; no books are opened; three classes are present, sheep, goats, brethren. The time is at the return of Christ, and the Son is on the earth.

Some Bible students also see in Ezekiel 20 the judgment of Israel at the Second Coming of Christ. We read, "And I will cause you to pass under the rod" (v. 37). This judgment, they say, is upon Israel re-gathered from all nations "into the old wilderness of the wanderings." The issue of this judgment determines who of Israel in that day shall enter the land for Kingdom blessing.

Again there is the judgment of angels. Jude says: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (v. 6). In Revelation 20:10 we have the final judgment of Satan after the millennium. It is reasonable to draw the conclusion that, if the greatest of the fallen angels is judged, then all other fallen angels will be judged with him. The Apostle Peter gives a fearful warning to apostate teachers in connection with the judgment of angels when he says: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet. 2:4), even so false prophets who are among the people and false teachers who are among you, would privily bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, that is, denying redemption by the shed blood of Christ. These, Peter says, bring upon themselves swift destruction. Paul also says that Christians shall have part in the judgment of angels. "Dare any of you, having a matter

against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor. 6:1-3.)

Finally, there is the last judgment, the judgment of the Great White Throne. It is the judgment of the wicked and unbelieving dead; not of the saved whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of these things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:11-15.)

HELL

This is a very painful subject about which to write. We are told in the Holy Scriptures that God "has no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Men turn away from this hard fact and the pronouncement of God's Word. One cannot read literature or life without

realizing that men make little hells for themselves here on earth. The thought of future punishment strikes terror to human hearts. People constantly ask the question: 'How is it possible for a loving God to punish eternally any of His children whom He has created?' The guilty consciences of men wonder that unless they repent and believe the Gospel an unhappy destiny awaits them. These and other reasons make this question of the final destiny of the wicked one of the hardest to receive.

Henry Ward Beecher once said: "I do not accept the doctrine of eternal punishment because I delight in it. I would cast in doubts if I could till I had filled hell up to the brim. I would destroy all faith in it but that would do me no good. I could not destroy the thing. I cannot alter the fact. The exposition of future punishment in God's Word is not to be regarded as a threat but as a merciful declaration. If, in the ocean of life, over which we are bound to eternity, there are those rocks and shoals, it is not cruelty to chart them down; it is an eminent and prominent mercy."

God's Word declares: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:5-6). "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

The principal terms applied to the abode of the lost

in Scripture are both literal and figurative. It is designated as a "place"; "Hades" and "Gehenna" are both translated "hell." We also have the phrase "place of torment" (Luke 16:28). To indicate that it is a place of suffering are the associated words, "the wrath of God" and "second death." The figurative terms setting forth this truth, as used by Jesus are: "everlasting fire," "the hell of fire," "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," "everlasting punishment." The word "darkness" is also used by Jesus. We also find these expressions: "cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," "the furnace of fire," "the unquenchable fire," "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," "the bottomless pit," "the blackness of darkness," "the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night." As to the nature of future punishment the Scriptures clearly point out that these sufferings will consist in the loss of all good. They will be inconceivable, dreadful in degree, endless in duration, and varied proportionately to the sins of the subject. Opposed to this teaching of Scripture are the opinions of men.

The Universalists deny that any punishment awaits man in the next world. The Restorationists admit the fact of future punishment, but deny that it is everlasting. The Annihilationists agree with the orthodox view in respect to the fact and the duration of future punishment, but deny that it consists in positive suffering or pain. It is impossible to accept the opinion or belief of any of these, and at the same time believe in the Scriptures. As Dr. F. L. Patton reminds us: "Better

renounce the authority of the Bible at once than trifle in this way with its most solemn facts."

It is impossible to hold the position of the Universalists, because everyone knows that the Scriptures do not teach that all men go to heaven, for they distinctly assert that some do go to hell. Even in this world human society as administered by man recognizes law and penalty, prisons and penitentiaries, good and evil, rewards and punishments. We see this kind of principle operating in our bodies respecting health or disease; we observe it in the traffic of our streets when laws are broken and regulations flouted; we observe it in operation in the classroom on examination day; and history is strewn with nations and individuals who are horrible reminders that there is not only a heaven but a hell, not only rewards in this life, but punishments.

The Restorationists have many people who hold to their belief that there is future punishment, but that it is not everlasting. But the Bible reveals that, if we accept the endless happiness of heaven, we must admit the endless misery of hell.

The skeptic and the scoffer have long ridiculed the idea of literal hell fire. One can understand why all unbelievers, and those not reconciled to God, would want to get rid of it. There are only two ways to avoid hell in this life; accept God's mercy and salvation in Jesus Christ, or deny that there is a hell. On the Judgment Day men's denials will not save them. In that awful, decisive hour only Christ will suffice. Only if your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life will you then be acquitted and saved from hell. It is in this life that you must write your name in that Book of

Life. So far as we know there will be no opportunity after death. After death comes the judgment. Before death Christ your Saviour comes to you, and offers you salvation, full and free.

Is my name written there
On the page white and fair?

Most people do not believe in a hell of physical or literal fire. It is the subject of derision. However, if you scorn that, do you realize what you are getting into? It is an accepted law of language that a figure of speech is less intense than the reality. To burn your hand is a painful experience. To be acutely worried mentally is to know an anguish more poignant; to be tortured in conscience or tormented in soul is to know the sharpest pain of all. What is hell anyway? General Sherman said, "War is hell." Yes, but thousands of men die on the battlefield tortured in body but with the peace of God in their hearts and joy unspeakable in their souls as they go home to God. Hell is not physical death. That is the separation of the body from the soul. Hell is not spiritual death, that is the separation of the soul from God in this life, while the body is alive and while man is in it. Hell is eternal death, the separation of a human being from God, both body and soul, forever.

There are judgment days also here on the earth. They come to us in our experience. People are making little "hells" for themselves because of their own, or others' sin and disobedience. They come to us in our experience and observation. On street, in hospital, in

college classroom, in shop and factory, in asylum and penitentiary, we see the law of judgment at work. How do you react against wickedness, vile deeds, awful crime, unspeakable filthiness, devilish brutalities, and disobediences apparently incurable? How do you think the infinitely righteous and holy God reacts and will react when the time of probation is over and the Day of Judgment draws nigh? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). And as Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled" (Acts 24:25).

There comes a great decisive day, tremendous in its moral revelations and spiritual issues. There is a day coming when the working out of God's moral and spiritual laws will culminate.

That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away.
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?

O! on that day, that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,
Be Thou the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away.

As Spurgeon pleaded one morning, so I plead with you: "I conjure you by the living God, the righteous Judge; not by the feeble words I speak, but by the Word of God. It is but a little while, a very little while for some of us, and this life must be over, and then shall the realities of eternity begin. Oh, my hearer,

think, you must die, and you must stand before the Judge. You must be in heaven or hell before many more years have run their rounds, and can you be angry with a fellow creature for warning you, for speaking of these terrible things in love? Oh, I beseech you to flee from the wrath to come!" (*Sermons*, vol. 13, p. 95.)

Does the thought of the "pains of hell" awaken within you the fear of God? Why not then, as a great preacher suggested, change that fear of God into a godly fear? Do not say, 'I am afraid of God; whither shall I flee from His presence?' but rather say in the grand, sweet words of Augustine, "I am afraid of God, therefore will I run into His arms."

HEAVEN

Among the most familiar and precious words that Jesus uttered are these: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." (John 14:2.) These "mansions" are abiding places of rest, fellowship, and love. The Father's House is the dwelling place in which devout, believing souls will abide forever. The Psalmist sensed this truth when he declared: "Lord thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Also when he said: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." In the eternal home, filled with the glory of our Heavenly Father and lighted by His smile of reconciliation and recognition, in the high and holy place up yonder, are "many mansions" prepared for

His believing children from the foundation of the world.

I like these words of the late Dr. Griffin W. Bull: "Christ told them He was coming back for them. This is the answer to the homesickness of our hearts. We come from God and we are going back to God. The longing for this companionship is stronger in the heart of Christ than it is with us. The seas feel the pull of the moon and the soul feels the pull of the Master. I know Christ made the sun and the stars, but sun and stars cannot talk to Him and give back the love He lavishes upon them. There can be no moral affinity between soul and matter. Jesus said: 'I want you, and I'm coming back for you, be ready'. I think it wise in us to take God's handbook of preparation and find out what will be expected of us in heaven. How we shall behave, and dress, and whom we shall meet, what shall be the language. It is a glorious vision; trudge on like men, without murmuring; the goal is worth the going." (*Daily Reminders from John's Gospel*, p. 163.)

There are no finer summaries of what the Bible teaches concerning heaven and the life to come than are to be found in the brief statement of the Reformed Faith: "We believe that in the life to come, the spirits of the just at death made free from sin, enjoy immediate communion with God and the vision of His glory and we confidently look for the general resurrection in the last day when the bodies of those who sleep in Christ shall be fashioned in the likeness of the glorious body of their Lord. With Him they shall live and reign forever." As to the benefits that believers receive from Christ at death, I believe that the Scriptures teach

what is summed up in the words: "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies being still united to Christ do rest in their graves till the Resurrection. . . . At the Resurrection, believers being raised up in glory shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity."

Last year a remarkable *Life of Cruden* appeared, giving long delayed honor to this remarkable man and the even more remarkable *Concordance* which bears his name. In describing the heaven of heavens, Cruden says: "It is the place of God's residence, the dwelling of angels and the blessed. This is the true palace of God entirely separated from the impurities and imperfections, the alterations and changes of the lower world where He reigns in eternal peace. It is the temple of the divine majesty where His excellent glory is revealed in the most conspicuous manner. It is the habitation of His holiness, the place where His honor dwelleth. It is the sacred mansion of light and joy and glory." (Cruden's *Concordance*, p. 275.)

Cruden goes on to say, in reference to the life of the redeemed there: "The enjoyment of the divine presence in heaven is the supreme and everlasting felicity of the saints. Whatsoever is requisite to their complete blessedness is enjoyed there. There is an exemption from all evil. Sin and all the penal consequences are abolished. The body is refined to glorious life and the soul lives in communion with God and Christ. The understanding there shall clearly be enlightened with the knowledge of God. Here the revelation of God in

His workings and word is according to our capacities. But in heaven it is most glorious and our faculties are raised and refined to receive it. The communion also of the angels and saints in heaven affords the purest pleasure and the fullness of joy in heaven is everlasting without defect and without end."

Heaven is referred to under five names: "Paradise," "a city," "many mansions," "a house," and "a home." Those who live there are God, Christ, the Spirit, the holy angels, and the saints. Dr. A. A. Hodge says: "All the Scripture representations of heaven involve the idea of a definite place, as well as of a state of blessedness. Of that place, however, nothing more is revealed than that is defined by the local presence of Christ's finite soul and body and that it is the scene of the preëminent manifestation of God's glory." (*Outline of Theology*, p. 578.)

The Scripture very clearly describes heaven in referring to it as a place of light and beauty, of knowledge, of holiness, of rest, of comfort, of joy, of praise, of worship, of reunion, of waiting, of fellowship with Christ.

Men and women of faith sing the song of the Lord in a strange land. As the author of the Book of Hebrews expressed it, "But now they desire a better country." Percy Ainsworth was right when he maintained that the real work of the Church is not first of all to make this world endurable, but to make the other world real. "It is to keep the music of a pilgrim's song ringing in men's hearts." The pilgrim soul is one who has heard the call of God to come home and who has started; whose feet walk the earth, but whose heart is in

heaven; who thirst for Home Sweet Home in the midst of this life's pleasures and responsibilities. I shall never forget the home coming of a great American liner, bearing on its decks thousands of soldiers returning from the World War. As they steamed up the river every face was turned toward the dear shores of the home country. Men pressed upon one another as they thronged the rails to catch the first glimpse of loved faces after the months of agonizing separation. With yearning hearts and parted lips these homesick lads before they trod the shores were taking long, deep breaths of home.

There is a beautiful word in one of the Psalms which reads: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (116:15). What does that mean? Wonderful to say, it means that God is eagerly looking for the homecoming of His redeemed children. He is leaning over the ramparts of heaven to take into His arms these loved children of His, whom He has created, whom at infinite cost He has redeemed, and whom He has sanctified. Precious in His sight is their homecoming.

There at my Saviour's side,
Heaven is my home;
I shall be glorified,
Heaven is my home.
There are the good and blest,
Those I love most and best;
And there I too shall rest,
Heaven is my home.

Dr. F. B. Meyer, a saint of God, just before he went home wrote a letter to Pastor D. J. Findlay of Glasgow.

It is beautiful in its simplicity, faith, and joyous expectation: "My dear Findlay and wife: To my surprise, I have just been told that my days and hours are numbered. It may be that before this reaches you, I shall have gone to the Palace. Don't trouble to write. We shall meet in the morning. With much love, yours affectionately, F. B. Meyer." (Mann: *F. B. Meyer*, p. 195.)

What a wonderful thing to know that at the end of the road of life there is not doubt or darkness but the Father's Home and the Father's welcome. Over there is God's home and our home. There we will have unbroken communion with Christ and with one another. In the city that hath foundations there will be no sin or sorrow, nothing to mar or blight or make unhappy. Over there God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Over there all things will be made new, and God's people shall be healthy, holy, and happy forever and ever.

Life changes all our thought of heaven:
At first we think of streets of gold,
Of gates of pearl and dazzling light,
Of shining wings and robes of white,
And things all strange to mortal sight.

But in the afterward of years
It is a more familiar place,
A home unhurt by sighs or tears,
Where waiteth many a well-known face.
With passing months it comes more near,
It grows more real day by day,
Not strange or cold, but very dear,
The glad Homeland, not far away.

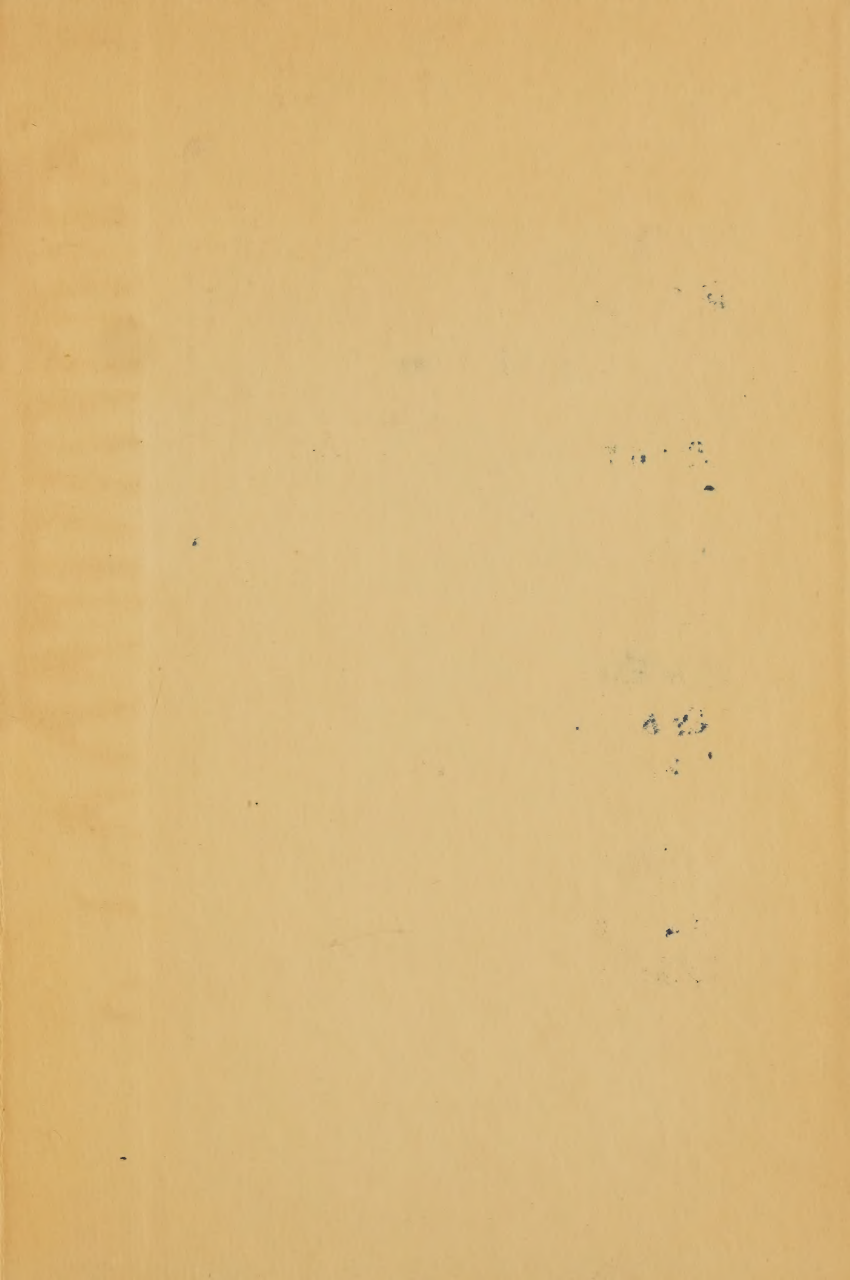
Where none are sick or poor or lone,
The place where we shall find our own.
And as we think of all we knew,
Who there have met to part no more,
Our longing hearts desire home, too,
With all the strife and longing o'er.

—*Browning.*

THE END.

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